

Presdales School



Title	Students with marked aptitudes
Version	November 2018
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Committee Responsible	Achievement and Curriculum Committee
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Date approved by Committee	November 2018
Date approved by Full Governing Body	NA
Review Date	Autumn 2: 2021

Enquiries & comments

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Presdales Policy for Most Able Students

Philosophy and Rationale

At Presdales School we believe in the importance of providing appropriate learning experiences for all students of all abilities. This aim is clearly expressed in the school's vision and values statement which promotes achievement for all and states:

"Presdales School aims to provide an outstanding education that enables all students, regardless of their background and starting point, to achieve and surpass their academic potential."

At Presdales we believe that a student's ability is not fixed; indeed we support the work of Dr Carol S Dweck who describes mindsets as "fixed" or "growth" as a way to understand how people overcome challenges and achieve success. She argues that one's mindset influences the way in which someone reacts to challenges at a basic level and this can limit success, (fixed mindset), or, alternatively, build greater success for the future, (growth mindset). At Presdales we recognise the importance of promoting a growth mindset for all of our students. Nonetheless, we also recognise the importance of providing an appropriate level of challenge for our most able students and this policy provides guidance as to how we will achieve this.

Consequently the policy has the following objectives:

- To identify the most able students
- To address the needs of the most able through providing support and teaching which makes their learning challenging, engaging and supports them in achieving their full potential
- To identify extra-curricular enrichment opportunities outside of the classroom

Definitions of Most Able/More Able

The Department for Education no longer uses the term 'gifted and talented' but does recognise the importance of meeting the needs of academically more able students. The DfE guidance identifies this group of students as being those who entered the Key Stage above national expectations in English or mathematics. The national expected score for Key Stage 2 tests is 100; this is from a range of 80-120, with 110 being deemed to be a 'higher' level of performance.

Identification

Students who are defined as being more able will be identified using Key Stage 2 data and this will be recorded in the baseline data that is available to all teachers on the SIMS database. This data is kept and stored internally as there is now no longer a requirement that the most able students be identified on a national database. Our knowledge of the students' abilities is further supported by the use of CAT scores and ongoing assessments within departments. Careful record keeping within departments ensures that progress of the most able students is tracked against target grades, monitored and reported to parents at each of the three tracking points on the assessment calendar throughout the academic year (see Assessment calendar).

Support within the Classroom

In every classroom we aim to create an atmosphere which is supportive to learning and which recognises values and celebrates the achievements of all our learners. It is the teacher's responsibility to differentiate their teaching and resources to ensure that all students are challenged and supported to achieve their potential. How we go about this is explained in more detail in the Teaching and Learning Strategy. Our curriculum also provides challenge, breadth and depth for students. In each year at KS3, students are taught in mixed ability teaching groups for all subjects, apart from mathematics and MFL subjects (except French lessons in Year 7). This approach is continued in KS4 and in KS5, students are taught in smaller, mixed ability groups.

Extra-Curricular Enrichment opportunities

The school provides an enriched environment with many extra-curricular activities; foreign visits and subject specific intensive days (see the programme of extra-curricular activities on offer at lunch time and after school and the school calendar with all trips, visits and subject specific enrichment listed). Additionally, students can participate in a range of enrichment activities to develop their potential with certain areas of proficiency. For example:

- Participation in local, residential, field and study/exchange trips
- Opportunities to serve on groups, committees and public speaking
- Participation in House competitions
- Opportunities to participate in special courses such as the Model United Nations competition, World Challenge and Mock Trial competition during the holidays/at weekends

All students are given the opportunity to participate with all activities outside of the classroom. As a result, teachers are able to support the most able in their learning outside of the classroom.

Responsibilities

Governors

To monitor the policy.

Assistant Headteacher in charge of Teaching and Learning

To monitor the quality of teaching and learning within departments to ensure that the most able are supported in their learning and to review the policy.

Heads of Department

To monitor the quality of teaching and learning within their department to ensure that the most able are supported in their learning.

Teachers

To plan and deliver lessons that include differentiated teaching strategies and resources to ensure that the most able are supported in their learning.