



Winchester House School
Higher Learning Potential Policy

Version 2

Responsible Governor: n/a

Reviewed by Katy Dallimore 3rd November 2020

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Next review 2nd February 2025

Incorporating:

Policy of Gifted, Talented and More Able Pupils

Louisa Farrow (October 2012)

Reviewed by Louisa Farrow (January 2013)

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At Winchester House School we are committed to providing a secure and stimulating environment that allows all of our children to achieve their learning potential. We value excellence, recognise achievement and celebrate the success and effort of all our children, encouraging strong role models. Our excellent teaching and learning aims to maximise opportunities and develop the children's confidence, so that they can challenge themselves and take risks. We believe in treating students as individuals, providing an education that is suited to their particular needs and abilities.

The school recognises that there are students who have a very high general ability across the curriculum or who have a talent in a specific area. These children must be identified, challenged and supported in order to ensure their individual needs are met both within and outside the classroom. The school believes that tailoring education to an individual's need, interest and aptitude will enable students to achieve and reach their highest possible standard.

Definition

The term Gifted & Talented generally refers to children in the following ways:

Gifted: Those children who achieve, or have the potential to achieve, significantly higher than their peers in academic subjects

Talented: Those children who achieve, or have the potential to achieve, significantly higher than their peers in specialist areas such as Sport, Music, Art or Drama.

However, the term *Gifted and Talented*, can be seen to represent a closed mindset in which children who are labelled as being Gifted can feel that due to their "gift" or "talent" they do not need to put in effort. This has the potential to lead to underachievement through lack of challenge and motivation.

As a result Winchester House School prefers to use the term Higher Learning Potential¹ with regards to the more able children. The key word being potential which indicates that even those children that do achieve highly still need to apply the effort in order to achieve their individual highest possible standard.

The School recognises that every child is different and therefore it is impossible to define a child with High Learning Potential (HLP). However, it is possible to define characteristics and traits that many children with HLP share. The [attached document](#) describes some of those characteristics and traits that may be shown by a child with High Learning Potential. It should be noted that where underachievement in students with Higher Learning Potential is identified, it can be as a result of a multitude of different factors and as such plans to support these students will be tailored to individual children.

Identification

A range of identification strategies are used in order to identify students who may have Higher Learning Potential. These include:

¹ <https://potentialplusuk.org/index.php/families/high-learning-potential/>

- Teacher recognition and recommendation based on subject specific criteria, classroom observation and work scrutiny
- A score of 130+ on annual screening tests
- School assessments and tests
- Information from parents and other outside agencies including former schools
- Peer or self-nomination

Students identified as having Higher Learning Potential are entered onto the HLP Register and their areas of strength and weaknesses are recorded on their individual Student Profile Cards. This register will be reviewed at least once a year. Additionally, the standardised screening test results will be compared with achievement in class so that potential underachievers can be identified.

Provision

The school will continue to provide staff development and training in differentiation, effective questioning techniques, thinking skills and will encourage all teachers to reward initiative and creative thinking. The Upper School Commendations policy reflects this by placing the emphasis on the process a child has gone through rather than the finished product. Teachers are encouraged to plan suitably challenging work to meet the needs of students with high learning potential by:

- Providing work at the appropriate level
- Providing a wide range of activities
- Providing opportunities for children to work with like minded peers
- Having high expectations
- Opportunities for independent study.

Teachers are encouraged to set up challenge stations/tasks/activity or other similar systems in their classrooms which will allow children the opportunity to access extension and enrichment tasks, if they have completed the work set during the lesson. Extension tasks build on the work that has been set whereas enrichment tasks allow students to explore similar areas to what has been taught during the lesson with developed higher level thinking skills.

Role of the Co-ordinator

The Student Progress Co-ordinator has overall responsibility for maintaining the High Learning Potential register and ensuring that appropriate records are kept. The Student Progress Co-ordinator will work in conjunction with Leadership Group, and other staff with progress monitoring roles within their areas of responsibility, to ensure that the policy is implemented and monitored and that salient

issues are raised at whole staff, HOD and department meetings. The quality of provision for HLP students across the curriculum will be monitored through regular scrutiny of work and, where appropriate, interviews with students on the HLP Register. The school's professional development programme will include relevant aspects of the HLP policy and provision.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in the Michaelmas Term by the Student Progress Co-ordinator in conjunction with the Deputy Head (Teaching and Learning), Curriculum Management Group and the School Governors.

There are 25 descriptors selected as representative of the majority of children tested as having high learning potential, applicable to a wide age range, applicable to children of different socioeconomic backgrounds, gender fair, easily observable in the home environment and brief and clearly worded.

Different children with high learning potential will have a different mixture of the characteristics but each should display a majority of them.

- Learns rapidly
- Extensive vocabulary
- Excellent memory
- Reasons well
- Strong curiosity
- Compassion for others
- Vivid imagination
- Long attention span
- Concern with justice and fairness
- Emotionally sensitive
- High energy level
- Perfectionist
- Questions authority
- Perseverant in interests
- Wide range of interests
- Good at puzzles
- Ability with numbers
- Judgement mature at times
- Quirky or grown-up sense of humour
- Intense
- Morally sensitive
- Prefer older companions and/or adults
- Keen observer
- Early or avid reader
- Highly creative

Research by Betts and Niehart², has led them to identify six different types of “gifted” learner.

1. **The Successful**
2. **The Challenging**
3. **The Underground**
4. **The Dropouts**
5. **The Double-Labelled**
6. **The Autonomous Learner**

And their research shows that Types 1 and 6 are the most likely to be identified whereas types 2,3,4 and 5 can often be overlooked and therefore underachieve.

Children with exceptionally High Learning Potential often demonstrate asynchronous development in which their intellectual development outpaces their social and emotional development and so it is important that these children are supported pastorally as well as academically.

Some children with High Learning Potential will demonstrate intense behaviours, also known as overexcitabilities or supersensitivities. Debrowski³ defined five categories of overexcitabilities. The following table shows some of the characteristics that *may* be present in HLP children.

Psychomotor	Sensual	Intellectual	Imaginational	Emotional
RApid Speech	Appreciation of beauty, whether in writing, music, art or nature	Deep curiosity	Vivid dreams	Extremes of emotion
Impulsive behaviour	Sensitive to tastes, smells and textures of food	Love of knowledge and learning	Fear of the unknown	Anxiety
Competitiveness	Sensitivity to pollution	Love of problem-solving	Good sense of humour	Feelings of guilt and of responsibility
Compulsive Talking	Tactile sensitivity	Avid reading	Magical thinking	Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority
Compulsive	Craving for pleasure	Asking of probing	Love of poetry, music,	Timidity and shyness

² <https://talentstimuleren.nl/?file=700&m=1381450002&action=file.download>

³ <https://www.verywell.com/dabrowskis-overexcitabilities-in-gifted-children-1449118>



Organising		questions	drama	
Nervous habits and tics	Need or desire for comfort	Theoretical thinking	Love of fantasy	Loneliness
Preference for fast action and sports		Analytical thinking	Daydreaming	Concern for others
Physical expression of emotions		Independent thinking	Imaginary friends	Heightened sense of right or wrong or injustice and hypocrisy
Sleeplessness		Concentration, ability to maintain intellectual effort	Detailed visualisation	Strong memory of feelings
				Problems adjusting to change
				Depression
				Need for security
				Physical response to emotions (stomach aches caused by anxiety)