

MORE ABLE POLICY

Last updated: June 2024

Date of next review: May 2026

Author: Drew Vermeulen – Assistant Head (Academic) and
Teacher of History

More Able Policy

Rationale

Box Hill School's student population is diverse. Indeed, one of its greatest strengths is the rich combination of pupils of all nationalities, cultures, faiths and backgrounds. Furthermore, the School also embraces the range of academic abilities of its students. Whilst the school provides a high standard of holistic education for all students, it is aware of the additional needs of those **pupils whose ability exceeds age-related expectations, as well as pupils who have the capacity to achieve or perform at the very highest level in one or more curriculum area, or in other areas such as leadership**. The School recognises that within a framework of inclusivity and equal opportunities, More Able pupils are entitled to have their needs met and addressed. The School also believes that educating and targeting More Able learners creates a ripple effect, raising achievement for a much wider group within school.

Identification

Box Hill School's holistic approach to education means that we adopt a similar approach to identifying More Able students. There are no percentages or levels; instead, a variety of methods are used, and each subject will differ in how More Able pupils are identified. In the first instance, CABT testing will inform teachers, HODs and HOYs of a pupil's ability in a national context. There is no definitive level a pupil must reach in order to be considered More Able; other factors must be taken into account, such as additional learning or language needs. Reliance on data can lead to More Able pupils not being identified (if a pupil is underachieving, for example), so as well as baseline data, teacher (either current or previous), parent or peer nominations determine a pupil's inclusion on the More Able register. This register is maintained by the Director of Studies and is a fluid document; pupils may be entered at any time by any HOD or HOY, following recommendation from a colleague.

In the unlikely event that a pupil should be removed from the register, a consultation will take place between the proposer of this amendment, the pupil's HOY and the Assistant Head (Academic), and the Director of Studies. The school acknowledges that the label of being 'More Able' can be detrimental to some students, leading to a negative reaction and poor performance.

When identifying More Able pupils, the School recognises that pupils may have the following character traits:

- Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas
- Quick/agile thinkers
- High self-motivation/initiative; can work well independently
- Socially adept
- Show leadership qualities
- Good/unusual sense of humour
- Sensitive/sensitivity and empathy with others
- Socially immature/isolated; prefer computers to people

In addition, More Able pupils may be highly adept at:

- Learning new ideas and concepts quickly/easily/readily
- Reasoning/logical/analytical thinking
- Dealing with abstractions/abstract thinking
- Visualising relationships between things; can generalise from specific facts
- Understanding things/meanings; show unusual insights
- Memorising quickly/easily

Furthermore, More Able pupils may show an inclination towards the following learning styles:

- Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; get bored easily
- Informed/show interest in ideas and concepts beyond their years
- Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical
- Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps
- Many interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects
- Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing
- Resent imposed timetable restrictions if interested in a task
- Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive

Strategies

In the classroom

The School recognises that no two subjects are the same in terms of how the needs of More Able pupils are met. However, all subjects will embed the following core principles:

- Exciting and engaging curricula designed to allow More Able pupils be stretched and challenged
- High quality teaching with planned opportunities and resources for depth, breadth, and increased pace
- Learning which involves opportunities for independence and autonomy
- Assessment designed to accurately highlight pupils' achievement and inform future teaching strategies

In addition to these core principles, teachers will strive to implement the following tasks and activities in lessons, in order to stimulate and motivate the More Able:

- Problem solving
- Public speaking/presenting
- Extended writing
- Leadership opportunities
- Debating
- Creative tasks
- Analytical and evaluative work
- Supporting less able pupils

Beyond the classroom

The School offers extra-curricular activities and experiences on a regular basis. Although these benefit, and are open to, all pupils, they are highly appropriate for our More Able pupils who wish to practise and extend their knowledge and skills. More Able pupils are, therefore, encouraged to participate in the following:

- Guest speakers and lectures
- Internal clubs and societies
- Subject-specific workshops
- The school's activity programme
- Expeditions and residential experiences
- Round Square conferences and trips
- Music and drama productions
- Subject mentoring

This list is by no means exhaustive, and it is recognised that teachers and departments will come up with unique and engaging ways to promote a love of learning, particularly among the More Able pupils.

DV

June 2024