

## **St John's and King Richard School Challenge Policy**

### **1. Situation at present and aims.**

This policy intends to ensure that an appropriate programme is available for all pupils identified as being Excelling, Excelling + (pro) or additionally identified as being Exceptional. Exceptional students are highlighted as a vulnerable group due to national historic likelihood of underachievement. Excelling students on average achieve their targets (P8) at present but we are ambitious for them and expect to see value added progress for students on the excelling pathway. The aim of this policy is therefore to prevent underachievement through spreading good practice across departments and the Federation, introducing standard practice and tying this in to a clear 'Offer' for students identified as Excelling and Exceptional. The ultimate aim would be for this to benefit all students across the federation. The Federation has fantastic teachers and '*excellent teaching enables students to make rapid progress*' (Ofsted, 2013). They are committed to sharing best practice and the '*ethos of high expectation and aspiration*' across the federation encourages this (Ofsted, 2014). This provides an excellent foundation for an outstanding challenge offer. The Federation will explore accreditation from NACE to ensure our challenge offer has been embedded.

### **2. Literature review and research**

A thorough literature review, NACE consultancy and outstanding practice school visits by the Federation Leader on challenge have identified four clear themes for any successful challenge programme:

1. Identification
2. Challenge and Enrichment
3. Raising and Maintaining Aspirations
4. Promotion of Independence

### **3. Identification**

#### **Identification of students with exceptional potential and those which are exceptional learners.**

We use 3 areas to triangulate the identification of learners with exceptional potential and those that are exceptional learners across the federation.

1. CAT data
2. KS2 results
3. Teacher opinion

CAT data drives the process and in line with NACE guidelines we analyse data to produce a list of any student who attains 120+ in 2 or more battery or is 126+ in a single battery.

We then triangulate this data with KS2 results and teacher opinion to ensure the right students are identified.

KS2 results (school pathways\*) are then cross referenced to see if we have the possibility of over achievement in a identified student's CAT. Or to see if any students have underperformed in the CAT test and a CAT retake may be appropriate to ensure holistic and robust entry to this exceptional potential group.

SLT and teaching staff then look at the final exceptional potential list and ratify this against the criteria of an exceptional learner, who has the; thirst, passion, perseverance, resilience and motivation (GRIT) on top of having the raw ability / intelligence. If they do they are 'in the zone' and we will work with them to stretch and challenge in all areas. If they are lacking the qualities but are HLP identified then they are put outside the zone and intervention will be put in place to move them towards it. This list is then refined over time through teacher voice / reporting where students can move toward or away from the zone.

Departments also will create a subject 'natural ability' list of students they think are students with natural ability, interest and passion in their area of expertise. Students can then be handpicked from these subject lists to attend certain exceptional potential and exceptional learner sessions such as; STEM, motivational or PE for example if it suits their area of speciality.

*\* School pathways are set based on KS2 data and triangulate with CAT and teacher input. Exceptional potential / learner students should be on the Excelling or Excelling Plus pathway to be considered this, as this requires KS2 scores between 110 – 120 and average CAT predictions above grade 7. Teachers reporting on data can influence a pathway to go up to ensure appropriate challenge is always evident.*

Underachieving excelling students are identified through the ACPHA program following a termly data trawl. IEPs and targeted interventions are then implemented on a student to student basis based on individual issues.

The rationale behind the dual identification outlined above is that it offers more students the chance to be identified and as such, less opportunity for potential to be missed.

#### **4. Challenge**

Appropriate challenge is considered the critical factor in ensuring that students identified as Excelling, Excelling + (pro) or Exceptional remain engaged, enthused and motivated. NACE identify quality teaching as being pivotal to the performance of all students but to excelling students in particular. Key factors identified by students are teacher enthusiasm and subject knowledge of the

teacher. Excelling students in particular enjoyed and valued the opportunity to take control of their own learning. Challenge should be ensured by a number of means that could include:

- a) Differentiation in lessons.
- b) Open ended extension/homework projects.
- c) Menus of tasks that offer students choice of how they learn.
- d) Lessons/tasks at an appropriate pace for all pupils.
- e) Opportunities to study at the next phase/stage e.g. GCSE exam style questions for KS3 students.
- f) An appropriate mentoring programme that includes regular dialogue with parents.
- g) Subject/cross-curricular enrichment projects.
- h) Teaching roles for students using programmes such as MOOCS.

## **5. Enrichment**

Enrichment is pivotal in raising aspirations of students identified as HLP. This will help maintain engagement and maximise the likelihood of fulfilling potential. The opportunity to apply knowledge gained in the classroom in other areas and see how it fits into the workplace and further academic study adds an extra dimension to the learning of all students, especially exceptional students. It is important that students are exposed to a broad range of career options and are explicitly aware of how their study at school will assist them in their next phase of learning/career.

- a) Subject related visits that show links to jobs in the given field.
- b) Visits to Further/Higher Education establishments.
- c) Wider reading around the subject e.g. journal articles allowing deepening of knowledge.
- d) Lessons outside the classroom.
- e) Open-ended extension tasks e.g. tasks that may involve the counter-factual.
- f) Opportunities for students to work with other excelling and exceptional students from different settings in projects such as Model United Nations.
- g) Work with excelling students from other schools.
- h) **AQA Project offered to all pupils but recommended for HLP students.**

## **6. Raising and Maintaining aspirations**

The transient nature of our students and their ambitions when they arrive can make this a difficult area to impact upon. It is therefore important that we ensure that students are aware of a full range of educational and career options. For example, if excelling students have military aspirations it should be considered worthwhile to convert students to officer entry or a programme that pays service to Royal Military College Welbeck entry. Methods of raising and maintaining aspirations are numerous and could include:

- a) Identification in a specific subject ensuring that within departments real talent and passion is fostered by personalised bespoke provision
- b) Visits by relevant personnel from industry
- c) Parental involvement on how to support and possible futures experiences - careers and university fair attendance from Y10.
- d) Aspirational careers interviews
- e) Careful monitoring
- f) Appropriate mentoring that encourages, enthuses and motivates
- g) Links with other students/school on linked projects e.g. Model United Nations

## **7. Promoting independence**

To ensure that E, E+ and Ex students are able to fulfil their potential they should be encouraged to develop their skills in personal learning and independence. Excelling pupils in particular have been shown to thrive when they can take ownership and accountability for their own learning. This also has the effect of allowing deeper learning for students. This will be offered across the federation through a range of activities that will include the following:

- a) Challenging and open ended homework projects that allow higher order thinking
- b) Work of the Pupil Leadership Team / house captains.
- c) Support of younger learners and primary liaison
- d) AQA Project

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that current best practice is always considered to assist maximising potential of all pupils and especially those who are Excelling. This policy will be reviewed in Sept 2018

## **Glossary**

NACE - National Association for Able Children in education - organisation to support teachers in providing excellent teaching and learning for able children.

Potential Plus UK - Independent charity established in 1967 which works with the whole family to support children with high learning potential.

IGGY - International Gateway for Gifted Youth - Formerly known as NAGTY (National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth) - Forum launched by University of Warwick that provides extra-curricular activities for secondary age students with higher learning potential.

The Brilliant Club - Organisation aiming to widen access to university for underrepresented groups.

MOOCS - Massive Open Online Courses - Short online courses aimed at unlimited participation that provide forums to support community interactions between students and teachers.