

POLICY FOR THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

General Philosophy

- At Bedford Modern School it is important that we continue to provide an environment which encourages a striving for excellence and where success is valued by everybody.
- Within the spiritual, moral, social and cultural framework of the School we aim to encourage **all** students to develop their personalities, talents and abilities to the full.
- We encourage hard work and commitment and celebrate achievement in all aspects of school life.
- We believe that teaching and learning should be challenging and enjoyable for students of all abilities.
- We recognise the need to identify our gifted and talented students as early as possible and to make enhanced provision for them.

Definition

Students who are referred to as **gifted** are regarded as the most able academically whilst those who are considered **talented** possess special expertise in areas such as sport, music, art and drama.

We regard gifted and talented students as **those whose abilities are so well developed and so far advanced of their peer group that it is necessary to provide additional learning experiences which develop, enhance and extend their identified abilities.**

Being gifted and talented covers more than just the ability to succeed in tests and examinations. Some students will do well in examinations but are not necessarily gifted, whilst others, who are gifted, may underachieve for a variety of reasons.

The definition of gifted/talented students at Bedford Modern School is based on **potential** as well as levels of achievement.

Identification

At Bedford Modern we will keep an open mind and avoid stereotyping. We recognise that the gifted and talented come in every shape, size, nationality and character; being able in a particular subject/activity is not dependent on gender.

Gifted and talented students will be identified as a result of:

- teacher observation of performance and behaviour in a variety of situations both within and outside the classroom;
- assessment using open/differentiated tasks;
- discussions with colleagues;
- discussions with the student;
- consultation with parents/guardians and peers;
- reports from previous schools;
- subject-based checklists;
- record keeping and student tracking;
- monitoring students' performance in national, standardised tests.

Few students excel 'across the board' but the key message is that **identification should be inclusive**, not exclusive; we look to expand the pool of talent.

Students will also identify themselves, and may request to attend activities and sessions. We applaud and encourage this 'open access' policy.

Aims

The School aims to:

- develop a consistent approach for the gifted and talented throughout the School;
- provide strategies for identifying our gifted and talented students;
- develop appropriate teaching and learning programmes;
- raise levels of achievement and recognise and address underachievement;
- encourage independent learning;
- encourage students in self assessment;
- develop leadership and interpersonal skills;
- provide a supportive pastoral and educational environment;
- encourage extension and enrichment activities both within and outside the classroom;

- promote parental involvement and partnership in students' learning;
- provide support and suitable opportunities for professional development of staff;
- maintain a register of those students regarded as being gifted/talented;
- maintain records of student progress;
- encourage gifted and talented students in Years 11 to 13 to act as mentors to younger gifted and talented students;
- provide appropriate resources.

Roles and responsibilities

The **Deputy Head (Academic)** will act as the **School Co-ordinator** for gifted and talented students and will:

- work with the Headmaster, Leadership Team and staff to develop, monitor and evaluate the School's gifted and talented policy and to lead its implementation;
- line-manage two Academic Enrichment co-ordinators (Y7-10 and Y11-13) whose role it is to actively seek out opportunities for G&T students across the breadth of subjects both within school and outside. They liaise with subject staff and pass on subject-specific opportunities where appropriate. Specific roles include overseeing our Oxbridge and EPQ programmes.
- liaise with, and support, Heads of Faculty and their staff in the identification of, and provision for, gifted and talented students, and build up their understanding of gifted and talented issues;
- collate and maintain a register of gifted and talented students; (The register will be reviewed regularly.)
- monitor the progress and welfare of the students;
- liaise with heads of year and tutors;
- foster good home-school relationships;
- liaise with outside agencies;
- liaise with the Junior School;
- liaise with governors.

Heads of Faculty have a key role to play in the provision for the gifted and talented within their subject area. They will work together with their staff to:

- produce the department's gifted/talented policy, encompassing the School's aims;
- develop strategies and draw up a checklist for identifying gifted and talented students;
- develop suitable teaching/learning strategies;
- provide opportunities for extension and enrichment;
- support and encourage their staff in the **implementation** of the department's policy;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the department's policy.

It is the responsibility of the **classroom teacher** to put the School and department policies into action. They will have high expectations of their students and will support and encourage them. Subject teachers will provide their Head of Subject with a list of students whom they nominate as being gifted/talented and will keep records of these students' progress. They will liaise with tutors and heads of year as necessary. In particular, the teacher will encourage the gifted/talented students to:

- extend their skills, knowledge, understanding and thinking;
- use their initiative;
- value independent learning;
- develop creativity;
- work within a variety of groups;
- take part in cross-curricular activities;
- be involved in their own target setting;
- develop leadership and interpersonal skills;
- participate in extra-curricular activities.

Heads of Year will be aware of the particular pastoral needs of the gifted/talented students within their care. With reference to the School's aims they will work with their tutors to:

- identify and support gifted/talented students;
- encourage the development of personal skills;
- promote parental involvement.

We value the co-operation and support of **parents/guardians**. Good communication between home and school is important to ensure that the needs of the gifted/talented student are recognised as

early as possible. The School and parents can then work together to give the student the best possible opportunities to develop his/her talents to the full.

Monitoring and evaluation

The policy for gifted and talented students will be reviewed regularly and its effectiveness evaluated using the following indicators:

- records of individual student progress;
- feedback from departments and individual teachers;
- students' comments;
- parents' comments;
- value-added information.

Summary

The policy for the gifted and talented aims to provide a consistency of approach; it is important that everyone works together for the benefit of each student. We wish them to excel and become happy, confident, well-rounded individuals who will make a positive contribution to society. The successful implementation of the policy will result in benefits to all students at Bedford Modern School (not just the gifted and talented) and allow each individual to develop his/her full potential.

February 2010