



Winchester House School
High Learning Potential Policy

Version 2
Responsible Governor: n/a

Reviewed by Katy Dallimore 3rd November 2020
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Incorporating:

Policy of Gifted, Talented and More Able Pupils

Louisa Farrow (October 2012)
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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.

Characteristics of a child with High Learning Potential²

- Unusual alertness, even in infancy
- Rapid learner, puts thoughts together quickly
- Excellent memory
- Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for age
- Advanced comprehension of word nuances, metaphors and abstract ideas
- Enjoys solving problems, especially with numbers and puzzles
- Often self-taught reading and writing as preschooler
- Deep, intense feelings and reactions
- Highly sensitive
- Thinking is abstract, complex, logical and insightful
- Idealism and sense of justice at an early age
- Concern with social and political issues and injustices
- Longer attention span and intense concentration
- Preoccupied with own thoughts (daydreamer)
- Learn basic skills quickly and with little practice
- Asks probing questions
- Wide range of interests (or extreme focus in one area)
- Highly developed curiosity
- Interest in experimenting and doing things differently
- Puts ideas or things together that are not typical
- Keen and/or unusual sense of humour
- Desire to organize people/things through games or complex schemas
- Vivid imaginations (Imaginary playmates in preschool)

Traits of a child with High Learning Potential³

Cognitive	Creative	Affective	Behavioural
Keen power of abstraction	Creativeness and inventiveness	Unusual emotional depth and intensity	Spontaneity
Interest in problem-solving and applying techniques	Keen sense of humour	Sensitivity or empathy to the feelings of others	Boundless enthusiasm
Voracious and early reader	Ability for fantasy	High expectations of self and others, often leading to feelings of frustration	Intensely focused on passions - resists changing activities when engrossed in own interests.
Large vocabulary	Openness to stimuli, wide range of interests	Heightened self-awareness, accompanied by feelings of being different.	Highly energetic - needs little sleep or downtime

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<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/my-child-gifted/common-characteristics-gifted-individuals>

3

<https://www.nagc.org/resources-publications/resources/my-child-gifted/common-characteristics-gifted-individuals/traits>

Intellectual curiosity	Intuitiveness	Easily wounded, need for emotional support	Constantly questions
Power of critical thinking, skepticism, self-criticism	Flexibility	Need for consistency between abstract values and personal actions	Insatiable curiosity
Persistent, goal directed behaviour	Independence in attitude and social behaviour	Advanced levels of moral judgement	Impulsive, eager and spirited
Independence in work and study	Self-acceptance and unconcern for social norms	Idealism and sense of justice	Perserverance - strong determination in areas of importance
Diversity of interests and abilities	Radicalism		High Levels of frustration - particularly when having difficulty meeting standards of performance
	Aesthetic and moral commitment to self-selected work		VOlatile temper, especially related to perceptions of failure
			Non-stop talking / chattering

As these tables show some of the characteristics and traits related to High Potential Learning can have a negative effect on attainment, behaviour and self-esteem. Therefore, identification of these children is important so that appropriate support strategies are put in place to allow these children to reach their potential.

Research by Betts and Niehart⁴, 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.

⁴ <https://talentstimuleren.nl/?file=700&m=1381450002&action=file.download>

Some children with High Learning Potential will demonstrate intense behaviours, also known as overexcitabilities or supersensitivities. Debrowski⁵ 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 Organising	Craving for pleasure	Asking of probing questions	Love of poetry, music, drama	Timidity and shyness
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)

⁵ <https://www.verywell.com/dabrowskis-overexcitabilities-in-gifted-children-1449118>