

Gifted and Talented Policy

Adopted: July 2010

Review: July 2013

1. AIMS

Every student has gifts and talents. JCoSS is an academic school offering a varied curriculum and has an active policy of inclusion. We aim to stretch all children to achieve their full potential and our ethos is one of “Challenge and Success for All”. It is the school’s declared target for its first cohort to be in the top 10% of UK schools for progress.

JCoSS aims to provide:

- an appropriate differentiated education for all students;
- an environment to instil a lifelong commitment to learning;
- a curriculum which will stretch students of marked ability;
- opportunities to develop specific skills or talents;
- support and encouragement for those identified as having one or many gifts and talents.

2. DEFINITION AND IDENTIFICATION

While definitions of “giftedness” and “talent” are wide ranging and varied, at JCoSS gifted and talented students are those who display a potential to exhibit exceptional performance in one or more areas of endeavour, be they academic, expressive or social.

JCoSS is an inclusive school which recognises that young people have a great capacity for change and development. As a result the JCoSS Gifted and Talented Register is made up of two groups of students:

Control Group – 10% of each year group who have been identified as being multiply or exceptionally able through a combination of staff identification in three or more subject areas, CAT scores, SATs data, internal assessments and classroom observation.

Subject Group – students who have been identified by subject staff, other staff members or parents as having a specific gift or talent.

Human gifts and talents are flexible and wide-ranging and there is therefore no single method of identifying a gifted and talented student. The identification of such students at JCoSS will always be made through a process of consultation and discussion with parents, school staff, the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator and of course the student themselves.

The JCoSS Gifted and Talented Register is reviewed regularly and students will be added and removed as appropriate. As with identification, any amendments made will be the result of discussion between the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, school staff and the student.

3. SUCCESS CRITERIA AND MONITORING

Students will be regularly tested and set targets by subject staff and all students will be encouraged to take an active part in any discussion of their current achievements and projected progress. The success criteria for Gifted and Talented students will be to set and achieve ambitious targets at identified stages in their education. Such targets are both quantitative (e.g. grades) and qualitative (e.g. leadership, participation).

The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator will work with all staff (though particularly Year Learning Co-ordinators and Heads of Department) to identify, track, support and challenge Gifted and Talented students, including those at risk of under-achieving. Subject departments will maintain individual policies for the identification of, and provision for, gifted and talented children. Such provision will form part of the Subject Development Plan each year and will be formally evaluated each academic year. The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator will be directly accountable to a member of the Senior Management team and an appointed Governor responsible for gifted and talented provision.

4. PROVISION WITHIN THE CLASSROOM

All lessons at JCoSS will stretch, challenge and support all students through a variety of means. Certain of these means will be of particular relevance to Gifted and Talented students and may include:

- accelerated setting in certain subjects e.g. Maths, Languages and Science
- extension activities within the classroom which encourage problem solving and thinking skills
- enrichment activities within the classroom to expand student knowledge and frames of reference
- teaching which takes account of a variety of learning styles and intelligences
- the use of modern technologies to allow students to effectively access appropriately challenging activities within the mixed ability classroom
- opportunities for accelerated learning

Good practice and staff skills will be developed through the use of dedicated INSET sessions, external training, termly Gifted and Talented Focus Group meetings, departmental and faculty meetings and Learning Walks.

5. EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROVISION

Extra-curricular activities will build on and develop opportunities for learning which exist as part of the school-wide curriculum. Students will be encouraged to access or take part in:

- A wide variety of clubs, societies and enrichment activities in which they can develop particular skills and interests
- Competitions and national challenges
- Creative and Performing Arts workshops
- National bodies such as IGGY and NAGC
- External societies and groups which specialise in their field of interest
- School Council leadership

6. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school is aware that any decision relating to the academic achievement and progress of a student needs to be tempered by consideration of the whole child. The implementation of the Gifted and Talented policy will always take account of the impact an action may have on a child's social-emotional development and will give due consideration to:

- Their sense of personal involvement in decisions affecting their schooling
- The need for peer acceptance and credibility
- Their opportunities to develop "trans-intellective" capacities such as empathy and resilience

The school does not wish to create any form of label or badge for student identified as gifted or talented. Striving for and rewarding excellence should always be used to draw students together in pursuit of a common aim rather than to divide and isolate.

7. THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

The Jewish ethos of the school promotes discussion and openness. As such, the role of parents and other members of the community in developing well-rounded, successful young people is highly valued at JCoSS. Parents are acknowledged as being holders of vast amounts of information about their children and their input will be sought when identifying students who have the potential for excellence.