

Highly Able – Subject Descriptors

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Art & Design

- Are able to think and express themselves unaided in creative, original ways.
- They can generate and sustain their own ideas.
- They persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher.
- They push the boundaries of normal processes and work beyond expectations.
- They test ideas and solve problems relating to concepts and issues; they explore ways to depict ideas, emotions, feelings and meanings.
- They often take risks without knowing what the outcome will be; they change ideas to take into account new influences and they use materials, tools and techniques skilfully and learn new approaches easily.
- They are keen to extend their technical abilities.
- They make unusual connections between their own and others' work; they apply ideas to their own work in innovative ways and exploit the characteristics of materials and processes.
- They use their knowledge and understanding to extend their own thinking and realise their intentions; they communicate original ideas, insights and views.

Business and Finance

Includes students who:

- Show ability to accurately define key terms and definitions but also to demonstrate that they can use these terms effectively and applied within a given context.
- Independently research, analyse and select relevant information as they develop answers to questions.
- They will be able to lead and direct a team of other students in solving problems.
- In leading a team or contributing to the rest of the class, highly able students will be able to select information and knowledge from a broad range of sources outside the class
- Grasp a significant number of new concepts quickly
- Read widely, particularly Business and Finance news
- Be extremely interested in finding out more about businesses both locally and globally
- Be inquisitive about why businesses use particular strategies and make recommendations as to other strategies that might be equally as effective
- Ask many questions, suggesting that they are willing to hypothesise and speculate
- Put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question business strategy
- Analyse data or observations and make appropriate recommendations; understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence
- Strive for maximum accuracy in calculations involving revenues, costs, profits, cash-flow, break-even analysis and exchange rates
- Make connections quickly between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers
- Evaluate potential benefits and implications of complex business concepts

Classical Civilisation

Students show an innate understanding of written texts, both fictional and non-fictional from the Ancient World. They are able to evaluate the effects created by writers from the Ancient World with the intended purpose as a focal point. In their written evaluations, comments are perceptive and sophisticated, offering conceptualised responses and comparisons, where appropriate. They demonstrate outstanding contextual knowledge that is precisely deployed to answer the question set. Their writing is fluent and cogent, demonstrating a natural flair in style and tone. They will usually be avid readers of a wide variety of sources, both primary and secondary, focusing on the Ancient World civilisations: Greece and Rome.

Design & Technology:

- An independent, self-motivated learner.
- Produces creative and innovative responses to briefs.
- Is able to solve technical problems and overcome difficulties as they arise.
- Works safely and accurately with a wide range of tools, equipment and processes
- Uses a wide range of methods to evaluate their work.
- Can make improvements to ideas and products as a result of own and their peoples' opinions.
- Uses digital learning effectively to enhance learning outcomes.
- Able to articulate their thoughts and ideas and use their knowledge to assist their peers.
- Uses specialist vocabulary and technical terms correctly.

Drama

- An able student will be able to critically appraise their work in progress.
- They will show a thorough understanding of drama terminology and use it accurately and appropriately.
- They will have a detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of plays, the relationship between texts and dramatic styles and of social context and genre.
- They will have an extensive range of practical skills and be able to perform a role creatively with a high degree of originality.
- They will show a thorough awareness of audience and a strong commitment to the group.

English:

Students show an innate understanding of written texts, both fictional and non-fictional. They are able to evaluate the effects created by a writer with the intended purpose as a focal point. In their written evaluations, comments are perceptive and sophisticated, offering conceptualised responses and comparisons, where appropriate. Their understanding of syntax and overall form is developed, showing a clear understanding of how these structural elements can influence the overall style and effect. Their writing is fluent and cogent, demonstrating a natural flair in style and tone. They will usually be avid readers of a wide variety of genres and styles.

Geography

- Pupils who are highly able in geography are likely to: understand concepts clearly so that they can apply this understanding to new situations in order to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions.
- They understand geographical ideas and theories, and apply them to real situations; communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word.
- They communicate knowledge, ideas and understanding in ways that are appropriate to the task and audience (for example, writing formal letters and reports, producing brochures representing particular groups).
- They learn subject-specific vocabulary, use it accurately and are able to define words; reason, argue and think logically, showing an ability to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences. They use and apply mathematical principles (such as area, shape, spatial distribution) and formulae (such as Spearman's rank correlation coefficient) to solve geographical tasks and problems.
- They identify their own geographical questions and establish sequences of investigation. They understand, and are able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships (for example, within and between physical and human environments); enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information.
- They transform relief shown by contour lines into three-dimensional models in their minds.
- They are competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required in geography -- aerial photographs, satellite images, maps of different types and scales, GIS systems and so on; be confident and contribute effectively when taking part in less formal teaching situations.
- They take part readily in role-play situations or simulations and enjoy contributing to outdoor fieldwork; relate well to other people, showing an ability to lead, manage and influence others, appreciating and understanding others' views, attitudes and feelings.
- They are willing to share their knowledge and understanding, and steer discussion; have a more highly developed value system than most pupils of their age.
- They have well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and the inequalities of life in different places; have a wide-ranging general knowledge about the world.
- They have good knowledge of where places are in the world and of topical issues; be able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another. They transfer their knowledge of physics, for example, to understanding climate. Or they transfer knowledge of the industrial revolution from history to help explain the location of industry in the UK; be creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solution to a problem. For example, if faced with the problem of storm pipes being unable to cope with sudden storm surges in an area, they might suggest taking measures like afforestation to reduce storm surges, rather than proposing technical improvements to the pipe system. If faced with the problem of congested roads, they might suggest taxing cars more heavily, improving public transport or changing land use patterns, rather than building bigger roads.

History:

Students need to demonstrate **outstanding contextual knowledge** that is precisely deployed to answer the question set. This is the most important aspect of GCSE History. Students should also be able to **explain** answers. This means that they identify a number of reasons/factors that can be used to respond to a question, demonstrate understanding of these reasons/factors and explicitly state how they can be used to answer the question. Where relevant, students need to use make **deductions from sources** and **use them critically** to answer questions about the past. This could involve **evaluating the provenance of the source, including the author, tone, language, and/or purpose** of the source and then checking this against historical knowledge. **Writing should be sophisticated** with very few, if any, errors in SPag. Meaning should be communicated clearly and answers should be **structured in a coherent manner**.

ICT and Computing

Includes students who:

- Enjoy challenging work and problem-solving
- Enjoy researching and experimenting with emerging and current digital technology and the impact it has on our lives
- Will think “outside the box” and articulately analyse their findings which are communicated in a structured way
- Are able to work mostly independently; seeking help from various online and offline sources
- Are able to answer, discuss, compare and evaluate open-ended questions with a degree of maturity and thoroughness
- Are able to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.

Latin

Features of the very able Latin student are:

- Full understanding of the accidence and syntax of the language
- Ability to identify specific features of accidence and syntax in a narrative passage
- Excellent memory for vocabulary and different forms of words
- Ability to translate with complete accuracy from Latin to English and from English to Latin
- Complete understanding of the grammatical functions of words within sentences
- Immediate recognition of all the grammatical constructions and their impact
- Ability to engage with complex Latin sentences and appreciate the importance of different word order
- Ability to identify and evaluate the literary techniques employed by Roman authors
- Perceptive understanding of the ancient world as depicted in its literature

Maths

Pupils demonstrate high ability in mathematics in a range of ways and at varying points in their development. Pupils who are highly able in mathematics are likely to:

- learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly;
- work systematically and accurately;
- be more analytical;
- think logically and see mathematical relationships;
- make connections between the concepts they have learned;
- identify patterns easily;
- apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts;
- communicate their reasoning and justify their methods;
- ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics;
- take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems;
- sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions;
- be more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry.

Some pupils who are highly able in mathematics perform at levels that are unusually advanced for their age. Other pupils with exceptional mathematical potential may not demonstrate it in this way. For example, pupils may have high levels of mathematical reasoning but be unable to communicate their ideas well orally or in writing.

Sometimes highly able pupils reject obvious methods and answers as too easy, and opt for something more obscure. In these cases, formal testing alone is insufficient as a basis for identification. It is often helpful for teachers to provide enrichment and extension activities and to observe pupil responses to challenging activities.

MFL

Includes students who:

- Quickly perceive patterns across grammatical structures
- Readily transfer learned language into new contexts
- Recognise the cognates and learned language when seeing / hearing unfamiliar contexts
- Have questions about grammatical irregularities, or about extending grammatical knowledge
- Follow the gist of spoken and written language without having to know every word
- Enjoy the new expressive possibilities a different language provides
- Can express messages with high accuracy and precision.
- All students in this group enjoy challenging work and problem-solving.

Music

Qualities found in younger musically highly able children:

- The child is involving him/herself in music at every possible opportunity and displays increased concentration times when engaged with music as opposed to other activities.
- The child has an extraordinary (for age) musical memory.
- The child constantly asks to be allowed to play an instrument.
- The child sings well and it accompanies play or work activities.
- The child invents new music.
- The child is making extraordinarily fast progress on an instrument.
- The child picks up and retains information about music and is able to reproduce it through singing or playing, speaking about it or movement.
- The child seems to possess some musical skills like singing in tune, a sense of pulse, a feel for harmony, when in others it has to be taught Older children.

Qualities found in older musically highly able children:

- Is progressing significantly faster than pupils of a similar age or experience.
- Shows a remarkable aptitude for age in pitch discrimination or rhythmic awareness.
- Evidence of an exceptional musical memory or aural awareness.
- Shows a need to create music.
- Evidence of a particular aptitude for performance to an audience.
- Has an innate understanding of structure, patten or harmony in music which is reflected in performance.
- Inclination to practise and /or play at every opportunity (over a significant amount of time).
- Is deemed to be exceptionally suited to the instrument being learned e.g. making a sound way beyond expectations for age and stage.

Philosophy:

Students need to have a thorough knowledge of a **wide range of Christian beliefs, teaching and attitudes** in relation to a range of philosophical and ethics issues. They need to be able to explain why Christians would respond to these issues in certain ways and **use examples, quotes and teachings to support and justify these viewpoints**. Students need to show **developed personal opinions** in response to philosophical and ethical issues. Writing should be clear, **well structured and truly discursive** in order to get to the highest levels.

Physical Education

Highly Able is specific to each individual sport; you could be highly able in rugby but not in football, basketball, table tennis and badminton.

To be Highly Able in Physical Education, a student is capable of representing England, Sussex or playing for a professional club.

Science:

- be imaginative
- read widely, particularly science or science fiction
- have scientific hobbies and/or be members of scientific clubs and societies
- be extremely interested in finding out more about themselves and things around them
- enjoy researching obscure facts and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena
- be able to sustain their interest and go beyond an obvious answer to underlying mechanisms and greater depth
- be inquisitive about how things work and why things happen (they may be dissatisfied with simplified explanations and insufficient detail)
- ask many questions, suggesting that they are willing to hypothesise and speculate
- use different strategies for finding things out (practical and intellectual) -- they may be able to miss out steps when reasoning the answers to problems
- think logically, providing plausible explanations for phenomena (they may be methodical in their thinking, but not in their recording)
- put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions (including their teacher's)
- decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables
- consider alternative suggestions and strategies for investigations
- analyse data or observations and spot patterns easily
- strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts, and take pleasure, for example, from reading gauges as accurately as possible (sometimes beyond the accuracy of the instrument)
- make connections quickly between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers
- think abstractly at an earlier age than usual and understand models and use modelling to explain ideas and observations. Pupils may be willing to apply abstract ideas in new situations; pupils may be able to use higher-order mathematical skills such as proportionality, ratio and equilibrium with some complex abstract ideas when offering explanations
- understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence
- be easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas
- enjoy challenges and problem solving, while often being self-critical
- enjoy talking to the teacher about new information or ideas
- be self-motivated, willingly putting in extra time -- (but they may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly)
- show intense interest in one particular area of science (such as astrophysics), to the exclusion of other topics.

Sociology

TBC