



International School

Challenge and Potential Policy

Secondary School

Reviewed October 2024

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Challenge and Potential Policy

A Policy for All

‘believe that intelligence is changeable rather than fixed’ - Hattie, 2012

1. RATIONALE

Park Lane International School provides a challenging academic program and a supportive learning environment. This cultivates in our learners a reflective, open-minded, and inquiring approach to both their education and the wider school community. Our collective mission is to **prepare the young people of today for the unknown occupations of tomorrow**. In line with this, the vision for Challenge and Potential is to ensure excellent teaching and learning at Park Lane. We want students to be excited and engaged in their learning. With the support of their teachers, they will build resilience to challenges and actively seek the next steps in their own learning.

The aim is to develop the **full potential** of all our students according to their ability, both in the classroom and outside. This is achieved by encouraging pupils to work hard at their studies and join in the large range of extra-curricular activities available at Park Lane and beyond.

This policy is an integral part of the school’s broader development of maximum inclusion of educational opportunities for all students. It states our commitment to providing an environment in which all students are encouraged to realise their potential.

We endorse the NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education) mission statement:

“...provide for pupils with high abilities whilst enabling all pupils to flourish.”

All children need encouragement and support just as much as other children. All students should receive the education they need. As a result, it is the approach of Park Lane to simultaneously ensure challenge for students who seek it and support for those who need it.

2. AIMS

This policy is intended to support the following aims:

- Raising the aspirations of **all** students
- High expectations of achievement for **all** students
- Greater enterprise, self-reliance, and independence for **all** students

To achieve these aims, we will ensure that all students have opportunities to develop specific high-level skills, abilities, or talents.

All students are individuals with their own special needs and requirements. Most Able and Talented students need to be identified, targeted, supported, and challenged. Strategies have been devised and implemented, and pupil progress is to be monitored (in much the same way as stated students and those with learning difficulties/Special Educational Needs). Our Most Able students are not more worthy of individual attention than others - rather that, within a framework of equal opportunity, **they are entitled to have their needs recognised and addressed**.

3. DEFINITIONS

Ofsted (UK) define the **More Able** in terms of those whose progress significantly exceeds age-related expectations. However, NACE looks beyond actual progress to include those who may be underachieving or whose skills and knowledge may extend beyond the school's measures of progress and curriculum.

At Park Lane, the vast majority of our cohort would be considered as More Able, as a result of this the Curriculum provided is pitched slightly higher than average. Therefore, it is appropriate to focus on the Most Able as a distinct group who require specific intervention as well as those who are underachieving.

Most Able: This term refers to students who demonstrate a high level of aptitude in specific subjects. At Park Lane, more than 10% of students are classified as More Able. Therefore, the focus is narrowed to Most Able students who require more targeted support. However, this definition is flexible, and subject teams may identify students who need additional challenge based on their individual progress and needs.

Exceptionally Able: Those who have the capacity to achieve or perform at the very highest levels and may be entered for early examination or acceleration (discretion of Subject/Pastoral Leads).

4. IDENTIFICATION

More Able and Exceptionally-Able Students

Pupils in these categories are identified initially based YELLIS/CEM data. However, this is extended to a broader cohort depending on teacher discretion and acts as a means to target specific students who need to be made provision to ensure that they are receiving appropriate challenges and that their education experience is not limited. Identification of the Most Able students is made using [this criteria](#) set by each department.

These subject-specific criteria have been created within each department and use a range of qualitative and quantitative strategies to make informed judgments. These children will be added to the '**Spotlight Group**'. This group of students is monitored by subject teams to ensure meaningful intervention is in place to challenge and extend these students. This is a flexible list and can be added to as required.

Exceptionally able pupils are those that need to be accelerated or stretched beyond that which is provided by the current curriculum in a specific subject. This kind of pupil would probably finish their qualification early and need to be given further opportunities to allow them to fulfil their potential. Alternatively, they may need support from external sources to support their needs. This is especially true of talented musicians or aspiring national sportspeople. In some instances, we may need to modify the pupil's timetable to accommodate their needs – e.g. a national swimmer may need to attend national training sessions and perform early morning training. Departments are required to inform the Challenge and Potential Coordinator of any such pupil within their subject and show evidence that they are being provisioned for accordingly.

5. TRACKING AND ASSESSMENT

We should all be aware of our More Able students and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure these students are closely monitored, carry out timely intervention when required, and support these students to develop personalised learning goals.

Teachers use the Spotlight Group, available on Google Drive, in their daily planning and for preparing classroom provisions for students. These profiles advise teachers on how to extend students' achievement and support those who are underachieving. The register is collated and regularly updated by the Challenge and Potential Coordinator.

Transition

To support the transition of students joining us from both local and global schools, we utilise data provided by their previous institutions, including information on their admission to Park Lane. This allows us to understand their individual needs better. Additionally, we use data from Park Lane Primary School and Early Years to ensure that staff are informed about the needs of students transitioning internally, enabling teachers to provide tailored support as they settle into their classrooms.

6. CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

At Park Lane, our aim is to equip students with what Michael Young (2009) defines as "powerful knowledge." This ensures that students are fully engaged and empowered within the learning community. Teachers distinguish between substantive knowledge—what we want students to learn—and powerful knowledge, which helps students understand the deeper structure of a subject. Becoming a powerful learner requires challenging students' pre-existing 'funds of knowledge' with new insights. This process ensures that either the students' prior understanding or the curriculum will take precedence. To appropriately challenge all students, we have implemented the following measures:

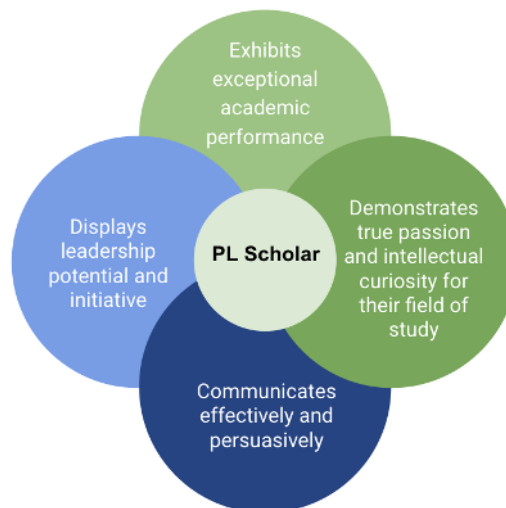
- Subject teachers assess and monitor student progress, setting interventions recorded in the 'Spotlight Register,' overseen by the Challenge and Potential Coordinator.
- The [Challenge and Potential Across the Curriculum](#) document outlines long-term planning for challenge across schemes of work (SOW) and extra-curricular opportunities.
- Effective management of pupil groupings (whether mixed-ability or ability sets) with recognition that all groups contain diverse talents.
- Offering a broad range of courses, including early exam entry or alternative courses, as determined by Subject Leaders and Pastoral Leaders.
- Offering a selection of electives in Key Stage 4, such as Philosophy, Psychology, and Additional Mathematics, to provide students with opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills in areas of interest.
- Ensuring a wide range of learning experiences and flexible pathways to meet individual learning goals.
- Enrichment activities integrated into the curriculum, not just additional work, to ensure differentiation and challenge.
- Making More Able supports a shared responsibility among staff, with Challenge and Potential students a fixed agenda item in Term 1 to encourage planning provisions for meeting the needs of more able students.
- SLT and the Challenge and Potential Coordinator conduct Learning Walks to monitor the classroom experience.
- In the 2022-23 academic year, the Challenge and Potential Learning Group developed provisions for challenge across subjects, seeking extra-curricular opportunities and integrating challenge into everyday classroom experiences. These resources are available on [Google Drive](#) and Provision Maps

7. ENRICHMENT

At Park Lane, we provide a wide range of enrichment opportunities that benefit all pupils, particularly those with the potential to excel in specific areas. Our approach to enrichment aligns with the Park Lane Scholar framework, which focuses on four key strands of development: academic excellence, leadership, effective communication, and intellectual curiosity.

Through the enrichment activities listed below, students develop holistically across the four strands of the Park Lane Scholar framework, ensuring they are supported in both their academic and personal growth:

1. **Academic Excellence:** Students enhance their academic performance through interdisciplinary competitions such as the Cipher Challenge, Maths Challenge, Python Challenge, Olympiads, COBIS Music Competition, Foodathon, World Schools Football Cup, and the World Scholars Cup. Additional opportunities include projects like the Young Historian Project, COBIS Poetry Competition, and language exams through the Goethe and French Institutes.
2. **Leadership:** Students develop leadership skills through activities such as Peer Mentoring (Y12), the Peer Reading Intervention programme, and organising school-wide events. The Duke of Edinburgh Award and opportunities to lead during Careers Day further support leadership development.
3. **Effective Communication:** Communication skills are nurtured through participation in Model United Nations, running and supporting the TED Talk Club, and writing for *The Oracle*, the school magazine. Debate Club and English Speaking Exam Board qualifications offer additional opportunities for students to develop their oracy.
4. **Intellectual Curiosity:** We inspire intellectual exploration through educational visits to institutions such as Oxford University and Czech Technical University, professional-led workshops, summer schools, the Learning Centre's 'Focus of the Month', and local TEDX events. Residential experiences and scholarly societies further encourage students to pursue areas of personal interest beyond the classroom.



8. PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Students identified as more able in Year 7 are given the opportunity to work with their Head of Year to create a Pupil Passport, which addresses key questions regarding their individual needs. This allows students to communicate their requirements to the wider school community. The Passport is saved on Provision Maps and is accessible to the Challenge and Potential Coordinator, as well as teaching staff, to support planning and ensure the student reaches their full potential.

In the 2022-23 academic year, teaching staff and form tutors received CPD from the Challenge and Potential Learning Group to better identify underachievement in more able and exceptionally able

students. The pastoral team, in collaboration with the Challenge and Potential Coordinator, works closely with students and parents to build motivation and set realistic, achievable goals for those experiencing underachievement. Notes from these meetings are shared via Provision Map, ensuring that the wider school community can incorporate the necessary support and planning for each student's needs within their subject-specific context.

For the 2024-25 academic year, our more able students in Key Stage 4 and 5 are being provided with the opportunity to work with academic coaches. This initiative aims to keep students accountable, supported, and motivated as they develop academically, cultivate intellectual curiosity, and enhance communication and leadership skills.

9. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At Park Lane, staff benefit from regular training on More Able provision through CPD within school hours, with extended sessions provided by the Challenge and Potential Coordinator and Teaching and Learning leads. Additional CPD is also available through NACE. Furthermore, staff have access to the following professional development opportunities to enhance their ability to challenge and support students in reaching their full potential:

- **Bite-size CPD:** An opportunity for focused sessions chosen by the staff member to develop strategies for activating hard thinking.
- **Action Research:** Opportunities to conduct action research to measure the impact of teaching and learning practices.
- **Coaching:** An opportunity to meet with a coach for a term.

These opportunities are in line with the school's Teaching and Learning Policy.

10. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

At Park Lane, we recognise the importance of engaging parents and carers in supporting our students' development. To facilitate this, we have developed a dedicated [Challenge and Potential website](#). This platform shares a range of opportunities designed to challenge all students and highlights specific strategies to ensure that our more able students achieve their full potential.

In addition, the pastoral team, in collaboration with the Challenge and Potential Coordinator, uses internal communication to track the progress of more able students, focusing on both academic and well-being goals. Our **Provision Map** programme enables data-sharing within the school community, supporting transparent tracking of student progress and facilitating regular reporting to parents and carers.

Classroom teachers are also empowered to share how they are supporting and challenging students during progress meetings, ensuring that strategies for more able students are effectively communicated.

11. ORGANISATION, COORDINATION AND MONITORING

The Challenge and Potential Coordinator's key aim is to support the secondary leadership team with the task of ensuring "... *that pupils are challenged more consistently across the curriculum to make rapid progress in their knowledge and understanding by reinforcing the aspects of teaching strategies that already effectively achieve this.*" (PL's BSO inspection team recommendation – March 2018).

The Challenge and Potential Co-ordinator has overall responsibility for:

1. Ensuring that the policy is implemented.
2. To assist **Subject Leaders** and the **Assistant Head Teachers** for Teaching and Learning with the process of monitoring how students (of all abilities) are being stretched and challenged in different subject areas.
3. To join and support established teaching and learning working groups that already focus on successful approaches to teaching and learning across the secondary curriculum.
4. Raising the level of challenge in the classroom through coordinating the **Challenge and Potential links** to explore, engage with and share pedagogical developments on the topic of differentiation in order to ensure that all **subject teachers** are challenging and stretching pupils of all abilities
5. Raising the profile and ethos of 'More Able' and in so doing increasing the level of **challenge for all**.
6. To set up and monitor initiatives to encourage more able pupils in particular to fully utilise their talents and abilities in and beyond the classroom.
7. To attend pastoral meetings and subject leaders' meetings as required.

This policy is reviewed every two years by the Challenge and Potential Coordinator and in conjunction with the Assistant Head Teachers and Principal.

12. REFERENCES

Many of the central ideas informing practice in the Secondary School have been guided by key publications from the National Association for Able Children in Education - such as '**NACE Policy Guidance**' and '**General Identification**' (NACE, 2023)