



## EXCEPTIONALLY ABLE POLICY

### 1. Philosophy

- a. The aim of Prior's Field is to provide an excellent holistic secondary education, bringing out the best in each student according to their abilities and talents.
- b. To fulfil this stated aim, the school benefits from an inclusive whole-school policy that embraces its exceptionally able students. Prior's Field is committed to catering appropriately for each individual student, and it is the responsibility of every member of staff to present the curriculum in a variety of ways that will make it accessible to all. This is facilitated by setting in some subjects<sup>1</sup>. It is expected that work in lessons will be differentiated, giving all students enriched provision as they demonstrate their needs.
- c. Prior's Field accepts that there are students who are gifted academically and others who are talented in other fields. The school accepts that provision needs to be made for enriching and extending these students in all areas.
- d. The objectives of this policy are:
  - i. to ensure that exceptionally able students are identified;
  - ii. to ensure that strategies to challenge those identified as Exceptionally Able in a range of ways are implemented across the school;
  - iii. to ensure high expectations for learning and achievement, and that teaching and learning is matched to students' individual needs;
  - iv. to create a climate of challenge in which students are encouraged to think for themselves;
  - v. to enable the Exceptionally Able to recognise their abilities and to develop the self-confidence to achieve at a high level;
  - vi. to ensure that the school is sensitive to, and monitors, the social and emotional needs of Exceptionally Able students, including their contributions to the wider life of the school;
  - vii. and to help Exceptionally Able students maximise their potential, enabling them to lead fulfilled lives and make a significant contribution to society.

### 2. Methodology

- a. Definition: Exceptionally Able students are those who achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly higher than the average for the year group in the

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<sup>1</sup> Maths, Science and PE from First Year; MFL from February First Year; English from Third Year

school. This judgement is made based on baseline data (currently CAT4), end-of-year examinations and external examinations.

- b. Exceptionally Able students demonstrate outstanding ability in one or more fields: academic; performing arts; sport; creative arts. Else, they will demonstrate personal qualities such as leadership at an exceptional level.
- c. Appendix I shows examples of possible sources of evidence to recommend a student for consideration as Exceptionally Able.

### **3. Responsibility for Implementation.**

- a. Deputy Head Academic
  - i. To be responsible for the EA audit and the selection of students to the register.
  - ii. To enable training on EA and differentiation when appropriate to keep all staff abreast of current practice.
  - iii. To meet regularly with the EA Coordinator to ensure support and guidance while overseeing the processes outlined below.
- b. EA Coordinator
  - i. Working closely with Deputy Head Academic and Heads of Department to identify, monitor and track exceptionally able students
  - ii. Identifying the most able students to join the Huxley Squad
  - iii. Coordinating additional opportunities for the Huxley Squad to extend their academic abilities and interests
  - iv. Supporting departments in offering suitable academic cocurricular opportunities
  - v. Supporting Huxley Squad students in making positive decisions about clubs and activities to help develop their academic abilities
  - vi. Organise the academic scholars' mentors and oversee the half-termly meetings to ensure value and purpose
  - vii. Coordinating the schedule of seminars, lectures and/or workshops so that students receive challenging and varied super-curricular engagement
  - viii. Ensuring that potential Oxbridge students in the Fourth Form and above are offered trips and activities geared to extend them and widen their knowledge
  - ix. Running Sixth Form trips to Oxbridge events to run alongside the application process

- x. Consulting with departments and the Heads of Sixth Form to make provision for a specialist to work alongside students to support preparation of applications and interviews
- xi. Playing a key role in marketing the EA provision in the school and providing information to girls/parents at open evenings and school events as needed
- xii. Being responsible for the Oxbridge process by
  - (1) Overseeing all applicants
  - (2) Ensuring deadlines are met
  - (3) Leasing with Head of Sixth, Form Tutors, HoDs etc.
  - (4) Helping to coordinate admissions tests
  - (5) Meeting with applicants as necessary
- c. HODs/Staff
  - i. To regularly review their EA subject criteria and use this to identify and monitor the students in their lessons/subject.
  - ii. To apply the EA criteria to their mark books and to take appropriate steps to accommodate the needs of the EA students.
  - iii. To provide opportunities to academically stretch EA students within their subjects, whether inside or outside the classroom.
  - iv. To raise potential EA students to the EA Coordinator and Deputy Head Academic

#### **4. Suggested Strategies**

- a. In some subjects, students are grouped according to ability, but even where this is not the case, suitable opportunities will be found to enrich and extend able students.
- b. Within the Curriculum
  - i. Where appropriate, use of setting to enable greater differentiation of learning.
  - ii. Schemes of work to provide for the most able by content choice, enrichment and/or extension activities.
  - iii. Use of differentiation within lessons, such as through task, dialogue, outcome, resource, content and style of questioning.
  - iv. Differentiated prep.
  - v. Assessment strategies that encourage peer and self-assessment, self-review and self-criticism, all of which help students to take charge of their own learning.

- vi. Teaching methods that encourage and develop higher-order thinking skills.
  - vii. Use of lesson time to ensure that lessons are interactive and delivered with a brisk intellectual pace.
- c. Within the School
- i. Clubs
  - ii. Competitions
  - iii. Co-curricular programme
  - iv. Visiting speakers
  - v. Use of most able students themselves to help deliver the curriculum
  - vi. Celebration of all areas of the curriculum on a regular basis
  - vii. Enrichment sessions
  - viii. Huxley Routemaster
  - ix. Huxley Frog page
- d. Via External Opportunities
- i. Cluster activities
  - ii. Master classes
  - iii. Local community joint action
  - iv. External organisations

## 5. Evaluation

- a. This effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated by the Deputy Head Academic and the Oxbridge & EA Coordinator

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Reviewed by:</b>         | <b>Deputy Head Academic</b> |
| <b>Date of next review:</b> | <b>1 September 2025</b>     |
| <b>Governors review:</b>    | <b>N/A</b>                  |
| <b>Location:</b>            | <b>Portal/website</b>       |

**6. Appendix I. Possible Sources of Evidence to recommend a student for consideration as Exceptionally Able.**

| <b>Source of Evidence</b> | <b>Possible Evidence</b>   | <b>Points to remember</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Monitoring</b>   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Teachers                  | <p>Observation of students in class, including formative and summative assessments.</p> <p>Make judgements about students' performance in relation to that of the cohort. This may be beyond the class room, for example in clubs.</p> | <p>Record outcomes of observations.</p> <p>May miss underachievers, students with motivational or emotional problems.</p> <p>Must be inclusive in terms of racial, cultural and socio-economic background, gender, disability and geographic isolation.</p> <p>Subject criteria for identification should be referred to. See relevant Dept. Handbook</p> <p>Requires supplementation with other data.</p> <p>Liable to be most unreliable means of identification so needs regular reviewing against students' progress and performance.</p> | <p>HODs send names to DHA, EACo &amp; Heads EA</p> <p>Added to iSams</p>                        | <p>Register managed and updated by Heads EA</p> <p>HODs and all staff use register to inform teaching.</p> <p>Reviewed in exam meetings. EACo to monitor.</p> |
| Base Line Data            | <p>Use of CAT4 data</p> <p>CAT4 scores of over 125 place in the top 4% nationally and are used to identify EA students.</p> <p>CAT4 tests taken at beginning of years 1, Lower Sixth and midway through Year 3.</p>                    | <p>May not identify those with reading difficulties, emotional or motivational problems.</p> <p>There may be built in gender or cultural biases in test format and content.</p> <p>SEN students can be in this cohort.</p>  | <p>EA flag.</p> <p>Huxley Squad flag. (This group automatically selected for Huxley Squad.)</p> | <p>As above.</p>  |

|                |   |  |  |           |
|----------------|---|--|--|-----------|
| Internal Exams | The top students in the yearly internal exams (number depends on cohort but should not be more than 5). | Student's performance can dip and this needs to be flagged and followed up (see below).  | EA flag<br>Huxley Squad                        | As Above. |
| Scholarships   | + 11, +13   | <p>Honorary Academic scholarships are given to students who achieve who rank 1-5 in internal summer exams.</p> <p>Scholarships type e.g. Music, Art, Drama, Sport are added to separate field on register but all fall under the scholarship flag.</p> <p>Exhibitions fall within this category.</p> | EA flag.<br>Scholarships flag.<br>Huxley Squad | As Above. |