

# Gifted Able and Talented

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*(Reviewer: Lloyd Dannatt / Liam Agate; February 2023)*

Hurst adopts a whole school approach led by the Director of Academic Development and Deputy Head Academic. Academically able pupils and students are supported as below. Those that are talented in the arts and in sport fall under the remit of the Deputy Head Co-Curricular.

## 1. Aim

The focus is academic and aims to enrich and support the learning of those identified as 'gifted', 'able' and 'talented' in specific ways, in order that the pupils achieve their personal bests and continuously make progress. HoDs and teachers are supported to enable the cohort to make the best progress possible.

## 2. Whole School

At Hurst that the primary area for academic stretch, challenge, enrichment and extension is the classroom. Additional provisions are intended to complement stretch and challenge in ordinary lessons – the unconditional expectation is that challenge and extension are a constant element of every lesson delivered at Hurst.

## 3. Junior Prep School and Senior Prep School

There are three key elements:

1. A gifted and talented register which monitors the progress of our most able students. In the Junior Prep School, pupils are identified using nationally standardised Verbal Reasoning (VR), Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR), Progress Tests in Maths (PTM) and English (PTE) alongside our own internal exam data. In the Senior Prep School, pupils are identified using nationally standardised Verbal Reasoning (VR), Non-Verbal Reasoning (NVR) and MidYIS data alongside our own internal exam data. The register exists to help classroom teachers identify pupils in particular need of stretch and challenge. Pupils with a National MidYIS of 130 or higher, or a score of 130 or higher in VR, NVR, PTM and PTE are placed on the register. Pupils who score in the top 10% in the year group in Year 7 and 8 exams are also placed on the register. All teachers are aware of these students, with explanatory notes available. The Head of Junior Prep, Assistant Head of Junior Prep and Head of Senior Prep, HoYs and tutors, monitor the progress of the individuals on the register as well as identifying those not currently on the register who may warrant inclusion. Pupils are not informed that they are on the register.
2. Specialised Masterclasses take place after school throughout the year. The Masterclasses cover all ages and curriculum subjects. The nature of these Masterclasses will either be purposefully intellectually demanding to engage and challenge the most able and passionate students or more inclusive to stimulate interest and enjoyment in all pupils for a particular area of the curriculum. Pupils on the G&T register, alongside those who show a particular interest for the subject, will be invited to attend each masterclass.
3. In addition, those children on the G&T register in Year 7 and 8 are encouraged to join the Junior Johnnians activity which is run by The Director of Academic Development from

November-May each year. This is based on the Senior and Middle Johnians and is an after school club which covers intellectual topics, including linguistics, arts based activities, problem solving, debating and political thought and philosophy.

#### 4. Senior School

**Middle School:** There are two key elements to this provision in the Middle School:

1. Using national MidYis and exam data, the Gifted and Talented Register exists to help classroom teachers identify students in particular need of stretch and challenge. Students with a National MidYIS of 130 or higher, or a score of 130 or higher in Verbal, Maths or Non-Verbal MidYIS testing, and any other students who score in the top 10% in the year group in Shell or Remove exams, are placed on the Register. All teachers are aware of these students, with explanatory notes available and the centralised G and T register. The performance of these students is monitored by the HoYs, tutors and Director of Academic Development, mostly commonly after Challenge Grade Reviews, with a specific focus on underperformance.
2. In addition the Director of Academic Development in consultation with the Head of Senior School, the Deputy Head (Academic), Heads of Years and Heads of Department and/or teaching staff works carefully to identify gifted and talented pupils suitable for the Middle Johnian Society (overlap with the G+T register is very high but not obligatory, to ensure talented but underperforming students are not rewarded). Led by the Middle School Johnian Coordinators, these pupils become the Middle Johnians 'special tutorial group' and coordinate special sessions given by teachers on an area of academic interest that goes beyond the syllabus. These sessions could be linguistic, arts based, problem solving, scientific or mathematical, with different departments provided talks on a rotating basis throughout the year. Special trips are arranged for the group, including an annual trip to Oxford University for the Vth form students.

**Sixth Form:** The Director of Academic Development, alongside the UCAS/ Careers team, provide a coherent programme to enable access to world class Universities or other vocational routes. There are two key elements to this provision in the Sixth Form:

1. Aptitude and exam data is used to identify a Gifted and Talented Register to inform classroom teaching. The qualifications for entry are students with an ALIs in the 95th percentile or higher overall, or 95th percentile in Verbal, Maths or Non-Verbal, and any other students who scored 7.6 or higher average GCSE grades (or equivalent therein given current "mixed-media" GCSE letter/ number grades). As in the Middle School, all teachers are aware of these students, with explanatory notes available and on the centralised G and T register. The performance of these students is monitored by the HoYs, tutors and Director of Academic Development, mostly commonly after Challenge Grade Reviews, with a specific focus on underperformance.
2. In addition, students (most, but again not all of whom will appear on the G&T register) will be offered bespoke preparation for application to Highly Selective Universities. To identify such candidates, students are asked to come forward and complete the "University Challenge", a short presentation task that acts as an interview to sign up to the programme. A parents' event for Lower Sixth formers early in Michaelmas also secures volunteers for

such preparation where frank advice and assessment of applicants' chances of securing places at Highly Selective Universities are given. Once signed up, HSU candidates meet to experience seminars or lectures given by HoDs that look at different subjects in new lights on a weekly basis, starting in the January of Lower Sixth. Students are welcome to attend these sessions all the way up until December of the Upper Sixth. If they are Oxbridge candidates, or students likely to be interviewed, the sessions in the Upper Sixth focus on preparation for admissions tests and interviews. The college aims to secure each student who will be interviewed three formal practices. Academic staff, including members of the Senior Management Team, interview alongside teachers from other schools/ universities where appropriate.

Specific provision for applicants to Medicine, Veterinary Science and Dentistry is provided in weekly sessions. Candidates also enjoy an additional trip where students spend two days investigating a subject area of their choice. All are given a reading list of books that formed thought in each of the academic branches.

Finally, an Annual Essay competition is held for the Senior School in all subjects, and departments put on a range of activities throughout the year in terms of trips, visits, entrance into Olympiads and similar competitions to provide opportunities for the ablest students to shine. An inter-house, academic quiz competition along the lines of University Challenge (at Hurst called Top House) is also held each term to allow academic students to contribute positively towards house competitions. "Academic" player/ team of the moment awards are also given out regularly in Monday morning assemblies to celebrate excellent pieces of work of an academic nature.