

# South Dartmoor

## Learning Together

### High Performing Students Policy

*Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.*

**Gandhi**

*Learning without thinking is labour lost.*

**Confucius**

Updated: September 2015



## **A Context - Education for High Performing Students**

The framework for the inspection of schools indicates the wider challenges to ensure that high performing students are identified and make excellent progress. These challenges are:

- Mainstreaming high performance students' education – making it a central part of school improvement and the business of every member of staff.
- Ensuring effective challenge and support for all students, including high performers, in the everyday context of the classroom.
- Making sure that teachers plan to provide opportunities that stimulate and develop potential and meet needs in every lesson rather than just through extra provision.
- Identifying High Performing Students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

*Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.*  
Gandhi

*Learning without thinking is labour lost.*

Confucius

### **Statement of Intent**

*Our aim, at South Dartmoor Community College, is to encourage all students to make excellent progress in order to meet or exceed their targets through development and extension of their thinking; their potential therefore needs to be identified and nurtured through effective provision into world class participation and performance. This should be met through curriculum provision – in every class, in every lesson through outstanding differentiation and deep thinking; and through extended opportunity – extended thinking classes, guided pathways, and enrichment.*

*Through the High Performance and RISE Programmes, to ensure the percentage of 5 A\*/A (20%) and 8 A\*/A (10%) represents consistently our High Performance student target and moves beyond target; to support students in all age groups to aspire towards and to attain A\*/A grades to enable entry into top universities and careers.*

*The aim is to inspire all students through outstanding Teaching and Learning.*

## **A Whole-school Policy**

Current research and thinking suggests that:

- More children can achieve high performance if you let them believe it is possible; and that how many is no longer determined by a fixed quota. Rather than making High Performance elitist, enable all students to gain skills and thinking necessary for high performance.
- Students will achieve high performance through hard work; through being set high expectations that inspire, motivate, stretch and challenge.
- Teaching that builds on students' passions, capabilities, prior knowledge, and interests will promote outstanding progress and outcomes.
- Giving students chances to reflect upon quality feedback and given extra time to develop their learning, or to address emerging needs, will result in deeper thinking and higher performance.
- Adapting teaching through differentiation to respond to the strengths and needs of all students will develop a high performing community of learners with life-long positive learning habits.

*Any human anywhere will blossom in a hundred unexpected talents and capacities simply by being given the opportunity to do so.*

Doris Lessing

South Dartmoor Community College aims to provide for the individual needs of all students through Arrow Teaching and Learning including the development of Learning Habits, Inspirational Student Work, Extended Thinking, Differentiation and Pro-active Intervention but above all through hard work, high expectations and challenging work. Therefore, it is important that High Performance is clearly understood and strategies developed to enable all students to develop High Levels of Performance and Thinking.

**It is important to recognise the existence of all round exceptional ability through hard work but we also acknowledge the greater number of students who are High Performing in specific areas or are making excellent progress through dedicated study.**

Key areas of High Level Thinking and Performance being used at South Dartmoor include:

- Ethos of responsibility and hard work – students who try harder do better. Developing a positive Growth Mindset (Carole Dweck).
- Creating lessons with professional expectations, skills and learning so that students become more than people who can just pass exams. Creating tasks that demand high order thinking.
- Split Screen Lessons in all Subjects – focus on what and how of teaching and learning through use of Learning Habits.
- Focus on high quality interactions between all people in the learning community including deepening ideas through high level thinking and questions, through varying the roles played by members of the community.
- Supporting students to gain a sense of self, their own intelligence, their strengths and needs – empowering learners.
- Extended Thinking through – De Bono’s Thinking Hats and Lateral Thinking; Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence and Future Thinking; Bloom’s Taxonomy; Total Fitness models. In Year 7 and 8 Humanities, specific extended thinking lessons, but built into all subjects.
- Outstanding differentiation – *see differentiation section of the HP guide.*

There is flexible provision for students requiring enrichment and support (outlined in individual department’s HP Policies) thus permitting these students to achieve their full potential and raise their aspirations and attainment by developing their:

- Ability to learn – learning, contextualising, asserting, sense of self.
- Range of knowledge.
- Strategic, thinking, social and emotional learning habits.
- Core skills such as problem solving, thinking, questioning, reading, and listening.
- Creativity.

- Intellectual curiosity.
- Specific talents relating to areas such as leadership, social and emotional skills, and career progression.

*A variety of processes will enable individual High Performing students across the whole college and within individual subjects to be identified. The curriculum will take into account the needs of High Performing students through differentiation, extension, enrichment and acceleration, making use of all available expertise.*

*The pastoral needs of High Performing students will be recognised and supported by the college. The Teaching and Learning Leadership Team (CULT) will provide support by liaising with subject leaders and subject teachers about appropriate strategies to support High Performance students. Strategies, Resources and Reading/Video materials will be included in the Teaching and Learning Arrow ICT Website.*

## **Identification of the Cohort of Individual High Performance Students**

The identification of High Performance students is not an easy task as ideally this could be the whole cohort; consequently, a variety of methods are employed which can give reasonable information collectively. Each method of identification has limitations, so we are not too dogmatic in our approach, instead keeping an open mind.

The college may take advantage of information about students from a variety of sources:

- Teacher recommendation.
- Parents.
- Peers.
- Primary School through transition and HP workshops.
- Prior student knowledge will be taken into account, particularly at KS2 to

KS3

Transition and including KS2 actual and average point scores.

- Performance Records including Current and Potential Performance. FFT+1

Target

Levels for potential performance. SISRA Analysis for Current, Potential and Progress of HP Students.

- Formal tests including CATs, subject assessments, Reading Age.
- Records of national curriculum attainment at end of KS3,4,5.
- Extra-curricular activities.
- Ability in games like chess.
- Team activities.
- Screening information.
- General checklists of the characteristics of High Performing students will be used to support staff referral including Multiple-Intelligence aspects.
- The subject-specific checklists will be used in departments to identify students.
- In a minority of cases a differentiated curriculum will be created to enable High Performing students to demonstrate their abilities such as Extended Thinking classes in Year 8 and option routes (FSMQ, GCSE General Studies, HPQ, EPQ, A Level Critical Thinking, A Level General Studies, A Level Classics, GCSE Triple Science etc.).

Identification will be specifically undertaken at the following scheduled times:

- Transition from Primary School to South Dartmoor Community College.
- Induction testing in Year 7. FFT+1 Data created.
- June of Year 7; also Years 8-11 reviewed at this time.
- From transition into Sixth Form by the Leader of the Sixth Form RISE Programme.
- Upon admission into South Dartmoor at other times.

Identified students should be known to all their teachers who should differentiate lessons to meet their needs and monitor their progress.

## **The College Register**

Students who have been identified by a teacher as being High Performing are entered onto the College register. A copy is available to all staff in electronic form. Parents and carers are informed via electronic mail or post that their child has been identified as a High Performing student. This will, typically, occur at the start of the academic year after responses and comments from subject leaders at the end of the year have been collated and considered. A review process occurs at least once during the academic year permitting teachers and the CULT and SPIT teams to monitor progress and implement changes where appropriate. It may be that in some cases, on the recommendation of subject leaders and the subsequent endorsement of the CULT and SPIT teams, that a student may be fast-tracked as a High Performing student in some subject areas. The parents or carers are consulted before a student's name is placed on the register. After the register is constructed it is reviewed at least once a year at a meeting of the staff concerned and the progress of each student towards their targets evaluated. If a student is not reaching their full potential or has achieved the set targets, new arrangements or where necessary, new targets will be set.

## **Teaching and Learning**

At South Dartmoor Community College we recognise that it is important for High Performing students to work at an appropriate pace and in a variety of settings. Some hard working students grasp concepts quickly and are ready to move onto the next, or more demanding task; at times they may also need more time than others to complete work to their own satisfaction. High Performance often requires time and space for development, often requiring reflection and revisiting. Not all of our students will be good at all subjects and this may mean that some students will work at different levels for different subjects.

Teachers will provide appropriate, differentiated activities and a range of support and resources for ALL students in their classes through the use of Quality Information. This may include Differentiation, Learning Conversations, Extension Activities, Leadership Opportunities that are more demanding of their abilities or enrichment activities that

provide new and different ways of working. This is in line with all Arrow and Learning Habit approaches.

## Curriculum

The central aim of South Dartmoor Community College is to provide all of our students with educational experiences and opportunities which will enable them to discover and fulfil their own potential through use of the Arrow and High Performance Lesson Planning. All programmes of work will have opportunities for enrichment and extension activities.

Differentiation will be built into our curriculum planning:

- **Explicit High Level Thinking:** using Bloom's Taxonomy to develop High Level Thinking.
- **Differentiation by outcome:** Students may respond at very different levels to the same initial stimulus. Driving questions are used to allow for a range and depth of response.
- **Differentiation by task:** Some materials or activities will be accessible to only the High Performing students.
- **Differentiation by pace:** High Performance students need the facility to proceed at a greater speed or be given space to develop their work to a greater depth.
- **Differentiation by intervention:** High Performance students need to be stretched and challenged through direct intervention strategies implemented by their teachers and Teaching and Learning leadership team.
- **Differentiation by Interest, Resource, Response (Medium), Organisation, Seating, Expertise, Questioning, Dialogue:** see differentiation section of HP Guide.
- **Specific Classes and Impact Opportunities:** High Performing students will have access to Learning Enrichment Centre classes and resources, coaching and leadership classes, Stage not Age examination entries, extension classes, Residential Course, Special Events.
- **Coaching:** High Performing students will receive specific coaching and challenge goal setting from Teaching and Learning Leaders and Parent Coaches.
- **Access to External Resources:** High Performing Students will be encouraged to create learning links with High Performance Centres (such as Kilve Court or South West Music School) and to attend events, workshops.

### ***Specifically:***

- In Year 7 and 8: High Performing Students will be taken on Visits to develop ways of learning, thinking, extension and creativity. The focus: I am not formed yet; how am I going to form myself – dare to become the person you want to be. The development of courageous and curious thinkers.
- In Years 7 & 8: High Performing students will work in Humanities through Extended Thinking Classes and Home Learning Projects
- In Years 9-11: High Performing students will have an Option Route in Maths, English, MFL and Element (GCSE General Studies/HPQ).
- In Years 12-13: High Performing Students will follow the Sixth Form RISE programme.
- Provision for Learning Resources and Space to learn will be offered to High Performing Students in the LEC, Library, Sixth Form as well as within subject areas such as Specialist Coaching, Darkrooms, Language Assistants, Practice Rooms and so on. An ICT area for research, challenge and High Performance will be created as part of Moodle.

There will be a commitment to developing extension and enrichment materials which:

- Allow individuality of response.
- Encourage creativity and imagination, a sense of aesthetic.
- Satisfy developmental stage rather than chronological age.
- Teachers stress and praise process rather than content, hard work rather than talent, learning routines and skills. This links to the College Praise Policy closely.

### **The Quality Assurance Framework**

South Dartmoor Community College operates a process that encourages and records developments and areas for improvement on a regular basis. Monitoring the provision of High Performance students is part of the ongoing self-evaluation processes of the school

and is included in Performance and Subject Leaders annual programme and as an aspect of team review. Roles and responsibilities are clear to students and teachers.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Students**

Students review their own progress in terms of effort and achievement in regular review meetings with subject teachers, form tutors and parents. Their involvement in extra-curricular activities and commitment to wider reading is included in this review. Praise should be given for hard work, targets achieved and further goals can be set for the next period. Some High Performing students set themselves very high standards and may need support if the school's system does not build in the opportunity for them to surpass their target grade. This can be challenging if their target grade is A\*.

Students can also help monitor each other's academic and pastoral needs through, for example, a peer-mentoring scheme with older students or through peer-mentoring a younger student themselves. Students can compare responses to problems set and can share each other's answers, in relation to tasks that have been set, to broaden their perspective.

### **Subject teachers**

Teachers should check whether students are on target through regular screenings. They should discuss work with the student and gauge whether the student has experienced the appropriate degree of challenge in their work or whether they are capable of still further challenges. Issues of underachievement can be identified quickly and remedied. Teachers should develop and then share resources for High Performing students with other members of their team and with Learning Communities (Arrow, NQT). Teachers can introduce new strategies and use IT in innovative ways as they develop their practice (see TED Talks). Subject staff should be aware of policies, resources and reading related to High Performance.

## **Form tutors**

The form tutor can be an early detector of any signs of disengagement, isolation or underachievement. Patterns of work and achievement across different subjects can highlight areas for special praise or concern. Tutors should also be a close link with parents, who can share information about the student's home life. Tutors should set SMART targets after Performance Reviews in line with the High Performance Policy.

## **Subject Leaders/HP Representatives**

The subject leader/HP Representative is responsible for monitoring the provision for High Performance students in their area. They can do this through target setting, curriculum review and performance management. They are also responsible for identifying areas for further professional development and training. They need to meet with their Line Manger and share successful developments. In some cases it may be appropriate for subject leaders to nominate a named teacher with responsibility for High Performance provision in that subject area. Subject Leaders should use Quality Information (SIMS, SISRA) to ensure that their team is aware of:

- (a) The Department HP Policy.
- (b) The students who are High Performing in their subject through attainment, potential or progress.
- (c) The need to challenge top set students to reach and exceed target grades.
- (d) The need to monitor assessment levels to ensure that students are in the correct group where setting is used with regards to ability, potential rather than behaviour.

## **Performance Leaders**

Performance Leaders need to monitor the performance and pastoral needs of the students via the form tutor; they can also actively promote competitions, challenges and team work through the year system, house system and tutor programme. Performance Leaders have a key role in establishing an ethos for the House group. A climate where success is noticed and celebrated makes a huge contribution to supporting and encouraging High Performance students in our College. Performance Leaders should also ensure High Performance Intervention is in place if students are under-performing through SPIT processes.

## **Leadership Team (CULT)**

The Teaching and Learning Leadership Team have a responsibility to review the whole college curriculum, share successes and good practice. Progress towards targets and exam analysis will be discussed and shared as part of the QA process.

Meetings should be held regularly with groups of students in the cohort to listen to their perspective and review their books with them. The Assistant Principal in charge of HP should scrutinise student review data and look for patterns as well as individual performance. Students who are achieving well can be identified and praised. Students who are underachieving can be identified and action taken in subject areas or by Performance Leaders. The Leader of Learning Projects will ensure provision for High Performing students is undertaken and the annual review is undertaken of students on the HP register.

Feedback from these meetings and discussions needs to be shared with Subject Leaders, Performance Leaders and senior management teams, so good practice can be spread and targets reviewed and incorporated into the school improvement plan.

The CULT Assistant Principal/line manager needs to have clear input into the senior management team, staff development and the school improvement plan. The line manager works with the Leader of Learning Projects to interview students and review the quality of work in and across subjects. Quick action should be taken on key points or patterns which emerge. Evident needs are prioritised and finance can be allocated, when possible, to support developments or remedy a particular problem. The CULT Assistant Principal will include High Performance within the Teaching and Learning Improvement Plan and review its implementation and development.

## **Leadership Team - Overview**

The LT have a crucial role to play in supporting the policy and provision. The LT along with the Principal provide support and guidance for both the CULT and SPIT teams in ensuring the successful impact of High Performing Students Policy. Members of the LT with key responsibilities regarding Initial Teacher Training, Teaching and Learning, Data Provision provide relevant information that identifies and enhances teaching and learning opportunities for High Performing students.

## **Principal**

The Principal has a crucial role in supporting the policy and provision. The Principal's genuine support for this aspect of the school's work will ensure it is more successful and has a greater impact. The Principal is primarily responsible for the ethos of the school, which can transform the effect of any curriculum work and make it easier for High Performance Students to thrive and shine alongside their peers.

## **Governors**

The Governors have a key role in monitoring all the school's policies and practice. A nominated governor who has a particular interest in this area meets with the CULT Team to discuss progress and targets. The Teaching and Learning Whole College Improvement Plan identifies opportunities for governors to monitor progress.

## **Appendix 1**

Reading/Resources/Video: materials about styles and issues of High Performance can be found in the Arrow Website, Quality Information Section.

Sixth Form RISE Policy; Year 8 STEM Curriculum; Inspirational Teaching and Learning Resource – these can be found in the same area.

## **Appendix 2**

This policy is to be used alongside the HP Guide; Arrow; Teaching and Learning Policies at South Dartmoor Community College.