






Policy Directive

MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH PRIOR ATTAINING LEARNERS AND LEARNERS WITH HIGH POTENTIAL

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MEETING THE NEEDS OF HIGH PRIOR ATTAINING LEARNERS AND LEARNERS WITH HIGH
POTENTIAL

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. Policy Statement

From September 2019, learners in mainstream secondary schools will start Year 7 in all ability schools. Whilst this has always been the case for the majority of primary aged school children, September 2019 represents an important milestone for the transformation of education in Guernsey and the drive for opportunity and excellence for every child. It is important that there is a clear policy directive in place to support all schools in order that they continue to meet the needs of the highest attaining learners and those with high potential in any given area.

1.2 Policy Objectives

The purpose of this policy directive is to provide clarity about how all States schools in Guernsey and Alderney should meet the needs of high attaining learners and learners with high potential. The new model for education commits to providing the best for every child in the education system regardless of ability or background and it is essential that the needs of learners with high prior attainment and high potential are supported by all schools.

1.3 Policy Application

This policy directive applies to all States schools in Guernsey and Alderney.

Throughout this policy directive, 'Headteacher' refers to Heads of Service and the College of Further Education Principal, and 'school' refers to any education establishment.

1.4 Accountabilities

Headteachers are accountable for ensuring that the policy directive is followed in order that the needs of high attaining learners and learners with high potential are met and that these learners are well supported during their time at school.

1.5 Associated Documents

[Key Stage 3: the wasted years?](#) (Ofsted, 2015)

[Supporting mental health in schools and colleges](#) (Department for Education, 2018)

2.0 Guidelines

2.1 Definitions

High Prior Attainers

Learners in this group will be treated as a fixed group determined by prior academic attainment on entry to secondary school (through baseline data taken at the end of Year 6 which will replace the baseline data currently collated at the beginning of Year 7). Referred to in schools as 'high prior attainment', in recognition of the fact that those with the highest attainment on entry to secondary school may not remain the 'most able' throughout their time at school

Learners with High Potential

Treated as a fluid group determined by staff identification of learners with high potential and interest in a particular area; including academic subjects, sport, and the arts. Referred to in schools as 'high potential', in recognition of the fact that those demonstrating high potential in a particular area may not yet be gifted or talented in that area, and that those performing at a high level may not benefit from additional input.

There may be significant overlap in learners identified by the categories above

2.1.1 Supporting High Prior Attainers

Headteachers should ensure that the curriculum (KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 and KS5) provides an appropriate level of challenge for every learner, with high attaining learners being stretched and the low attaining learners supported as necessary. This should take place through both the core timetabled curriculum and through additional enrichment opportunities or additional support lessons as appropriate. Where schools judge it to be beneficial in some subjects and in some year groups, learners may be grouped according to prior attainment so that teaching can be adjusted to the specific needs of learners in a narrower attainment range. Regardless of the attainment range in a class group, progress of all prior attainment groups must be monitored and any necessary adjustments made to ensure good progress is made by all.

The Key Stage 4 curriculum should be designed in order to allow the high attaining learners to be adequately stretched, in terms of the number and range of subjects studied, including access to the most rigorous GCSEs. The Committee has agreed to move to an Attainment 8 measure for schools, a move away from the previous 5A*-C including English and Maths. Moving away from 5A*-C including English and Maths will prioritise the attainment of each learner as an individual and ensure that high attainers are supported to achieve at the highest possible level.

Enrichment programmes can provide important opportunities to stretch and challenge learners, and allow them to explore areas of particular interest.

High quality mental health provision should be available to all learners, there are many examples of best practice which schools should take account of. Clear policies are in place in schools already and should continue to be the case. Please see Appendix 1 for further information.

2.1.2 Supporting Learners with High Potential

High attaining learners may not be equally passionate about all the subjects in which they are high achievers. Some of the most successful examples of support for learners with high potential focus on learners' individual interests and ambitions, including those of learners with non-academic 'talents' who may not fall into the definition of 'high attainers'.

A programme to support such learners will be piloted in the secondary schools, initially, for the academic year beginning in September 2019 in Guernsey and Alderney States schools. Criteria will be carefully set and applications reviewed by a panel.

Following the pilot, case studies will be identified and reported to exemplify how individual gifts and talents are supported.

2.1.3 Expectations - All Schools

All schools will develop and share curriculum information across primary and secondary to ensure the Key Stage 3 curriculum builds on the Key Stage 2 curriculum, and that learners are not unnecessarily repeating work, as recommended by Ofsted's 2015 report entitled "KS3: the Wasted Years". Education Services will be carrying out further work with schools regarding future curriculum development in order that the progression between different key stages ensures that learners build on prior learning.

All schools should demonstrate how enrichment and extended learning (learning to be completed 'outside' of 'normal' lesson time) ensure that high attaining learners are appropriately stretched and low attaining learners appropriately supported.

All schools will use setting where appropriate to ensure maximum progress for learners across the full range of attainment.

All schools will ensure systems are established which supports positive mental health and well-being.

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All schools will have assessments that are structured to ensure that learners are not put under undue pressure, and have sufficient practice to feel as comfortable and confident as possible about external exams by the point that they sit them.

2.1.4 Expectations - All Secondary Schools

Secondary schools will externally benchmark progress at the end of Key Stage 3 to ensure good progress is made over this time and highlight concerns for any groups, including the highest attainers. Learner progress and attainment will be closely monitored during Years 7, 8 and 9.

Secondary schools will ensure that the Key Stage 3 curriculum is sufficiently challenging for all learners across all subject areas. Education Services will work closely with schools regarding future curriculum development to support this work.

Secondary schools will plan flexible curriculum pathways rather than hard streams, allowing a range of possible combinations of GCSE and equivalent subjects and number of qualifications taken.

Secondary schools and the College of Further Education will consider the choice of GCSE or equivalent qualifications and A Level/IB and Technical and Professional Qualifications in order to provide challenge and suitable preparation for further study.

Secondary schools and the College of Further Education will ensure high quality support and guidance about subject choices, applying to UCAS, completing personal statements, and understanding the financial implications and benefits of attending university.

2.1.5 Measuring Impact Over Time

This is a new policy and will require careful monitoring to ensure that the needs of high attaining learners and those with high potential are met and lead to positive outcomes. The framework below sets out how the effectiveness of the policy will be measured over time.

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| Area | Desired outcome | Measurement |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Curriculum | High quality curriculum in Guernsey schools providing appropriate challenge for the highest attainers | Positive inspection reports |
| Academic performance | Post 16: Improvement in attainment for the highest group of attainers, as identified by GCSE Grades, including achieving the necessary grades to access further study at top universities if desired. | Level 3 Results, including Progress figures New whole cohort reporting graphs |
| | GCSE: Improvement in attainment for the highest group of attainers, as identified by assessment at KS2 and/or Year 7 baseline. | GCSE figures reported to the Committee based on performance of high, middle and low prior attainment groups. |
| | KS3: Good progress for all groups including the highest attainers over KS3, avoiding the risks identified in the Wasted Years report. | End of key stage benchmarking (either Y8 or Y9 depending on structure of curriculum) |
| Engagement in enrichment activities | Y7-11: All learners identified as achieving highly or having the potential to achieve highly to attend at appropriate enrichment activities. | Feedback forms, possible annual presentation evening |
| Mental health and well-being | All schools provide appropriate support to learners to ensure positive mental-health and well-being | Learner survey data, any collated data on incidence of mental health issues |
| Learner feedback | Improvement in learner feedback on key criteria | PASS survey or similar completed at set points throughout school career |
| Parent/Carer satisfaction | Parents/carers will identify through annual surveys that the needs of their children identified as high attaining or with high potential are met | Parent/carers survey data |

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| Employer satisfaction | Employers will identify that the highest attainers contribute positively to the development of the workforce | Feedback from Skills Guernsey |
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2.1.6 Future Policy Direction

Curriculum

- To ensure continued development of the Guernsey Curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all learners including the most able, and allows learners to build on prior learning throughout all Key Stages
- To ensure the availability of pathways at KS4 and 5 that will continue to provide sufficient challenge for the highest attainers.

New Ofsted Inspection Framework

- To ensure that the curriculum, including the extent to which it meets the needs of the most able, is explored as part of the new Ofsted framework
- To ensure that the tracking of assessment data and attainment of all groups including the highest attainers should form part of the new Ofsted framework

Enrichment

- To consider how to extend the school day to enable all learners to access a broad range of enrichment opportunities, some of which will be targeted at higher attainers or those with particular talents
- To continue the process of sharing information about individual learners across primary and secondary, beyond their KS2 data

Benchmarking

- To implement a consistent approach across all phases of education in the Bailiwick with clear points, at which, progress can be externally benchmarked, particularly in core subjects

Future iteration

This policy will be closely monitored and amendments may be made over time.

Appendix 1 Mental Health and Well Being

Schools have a duty of care to all their learners and to ensure that learners of all abilities are supported to manage their mental health and wellbeing. Children and young people with good mental health are better equipped to cope with stress and life's challenges, and to grow into happy, healthy adults. Schools can teach children and young people what they can do to look after their mental health and wellbeing. As schools see learners so often and over a long period of time, they are in a good position to identify issues and intervene early.

Best practice guidance for mental health in schools

A whole school approach to improving mental health and wellbeing helps to ensure learners, teachers, staff, and parents/carers work together. Current research consistently shows that using a whole school approach is the most effective intervention and that it's particularly effective at improving outcomes for those most at risk. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Public Health England recommend that schools use this approach.

A whole school approach means:

- Identifying mental health needs within the school
- Having leadership in place for mental health and wellbeing
- Delivering high quality teaching around mental health and wellbeing
- Having a culture that promotes mental health and wellbeing
- Having an environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing
- Making sure learners and staff are aware of and able to access a range of mental health services
- Supporting staff wellbeing
- Being committed to learner and parent/carer participation

Links to best practice

[Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools DFE November 2018](#)

[Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges DFE May 2018](#)

[NICE Guidance Social and Emotional Health and Well Being in Secondary Education 2017](#)

[NICE Guidance Social and Emotional Health and Well Being in Primary Education 2017](#)