

Able and Ambitious Policy

Adopted: May 2016

Review: June 2019

Committee: Teaching & Learning

The Able & Ambitious policy recognises the most academically able students at JCoSS, alongside identifying and giving opportunities to those who are hard-working, determined, academically optimistic and ambitious, independently engaged and display attitudes that are vital for success in the wider world.

Key Statements:

- **Teachers will stretch and challenge all students. Our most effective means of Able and Ambitious provision will be seen from our teaching and learning which stretches and challenges each student within the classroom.**
- **Teachers will aim to uncover hidden talent, curiosity, individual flair for a subject, high intellectual ability and ambition in order to identify the most Able and Ambitious students, providing extended provision within and outside of the classroom.**
- **A Self-Selecting process for our Able & Ambitious students allows for an inclusive approach into our whole school and subject-specific higher learning programmes.**
- **All teachers at JCoSS have a fundamental agenda to plant ambition in our students allowing them to thrive and progress in a more free-wheeling and demanding atmosphere**

1. AIMS

Our aim is that Able & Ambitious students within JCoSS shall:

- be correctly identified as Able & Ambitious in specific subject areas
- have their potential realised through classwork and home learning that is tailored and matched to their individual needs
- be praised for studying in a climate of experimentation where failure is rewarded, where students embrace danger and take risks with their learning
- have opportunities inside the classroom and through extra-curricular and/or enrichment provision, to develop their skills, ability and talents
- have their emotional/social needs considered alongside intellectual needs
- have their progress monitored and supported (mentored) by appropriately trained staff
- have their parents involved in the process that recognises and nurtures their talents

JCoSS is an academic school offering a varied curriculum and has an active policy of inclusion. We aim to stretch all children, academically, to achieve their full potential. The key element in our teaching and learning is to provide provision for all students to uncover their full talents and ambition.

2. DEFINITION & IDENTIFICATION – What is being Able & Ambitious?

At JCoSS we regard being **Able & Ambitious** as *possessing expertise in a developmental stage*. This means those students who display, or a potential to, exhibit exceptional performance in one or more areas of endeavour, be they academic, expressive or social.

JCoSS acknowledges that being exceptionally **Able** maybe subject specific or more general.

The areas of '**Able**' that will aid identification are:

- High intellectual ability
- Mechanical ingenuity
- Physical ability in creative or performing arts
- High functioning leadership skills and/or Social awareness
- High psychomotor ability

JCoSS acknowledges that being exceptionally **Ambitious** may be subject specific or more general. The areas of '**Ambition**' that will aid identification are:

- Determination to succeed and/or academically optimistic learners
- Inspiration and/or high creativity
- Independent engagement/huge enthusiasm within a specific subject
- Curiosity of thought, flair for a subject, risk taking in quest for success
- Emotional intelligence

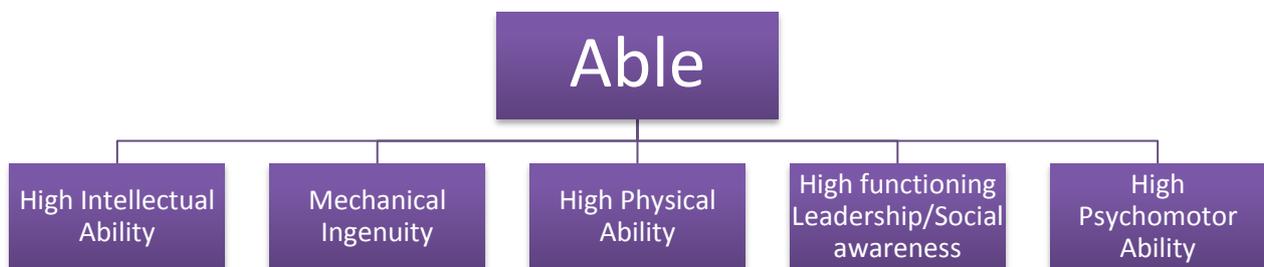
All departments have published the criteria that they can use to identify those students who are Able or Ambitious in their subject area (see appendix 1).

JCoSS is an inclusive school which recognises that students have a great capacity for change and development. These criteria will be used to identify students twice yearly.

The JCoSS Able & Ambitious register is made up of two groups of students:

Able Students:

- Those identified as being multiply or exceptionally **Able** in two or more subject areas through a combination of staff identification, SATs data, internal assessments and classroom observation.
- Student will be identified as **Able** if they have a Cognitive Ability Test score of 124+ in two areas (verbal, non-verbal or quantitative reasoning) or with a mean score of 120+ across all three areas.



Ambitious Students:

- Those who have been identified by subject staff, other staff members or parents as having exceptional **Ambition**.



Human ability is flexible and wide-ranging and therefore there is no single method of identifying Able & Ambitious students. The identification of such students at JCoSS will always be made through a process of consultation and discussion with school staff, the Able & Ambitious Co-ordinator, the student themselves and parents. The JCoSS Able & Ambitious Register is reviewed regularly and students will be added and removed as appropriate. As with identification, any amendments made will be the result of discussion between the Able and Ambitious Co-ordinator, school staff and the student.

3. SUCCESS CRITERIA AND MONITORING

The success of the Able & Ambitious programme will be measured using the following criteria:

- Is the Identification procedure clear and transparent enough for staff, students and parents to understand?
- Is the work in the classroom differentiated to provide challenge for all learners?
- Does the data at all Key Stages of our A&A students show evidence of good or outstanding progress/achievement?
- Is a range of subject enrichment provision being provided by departments?
- Is a range of whole school enrichment provision being provided for each year group?
- Does the range of school enrichment provision show it has a significant impact on the attainment/social, moral and cultural enrichment of each A&A student?
- Is our Able and Ambitious register linked to attainment, progress made and ambition?

Students will be regularly assessed and set targets by subject staff and all students will be encouraged to take an active part in any discussion of their current achievements and projected progress. The success criteria for Able & Ambitious students will be to set and achieve ambitious targets at identified stages in their education. Such targets are both quantitative (e.g. grades) and qualitative (e.g. leadership, participation).

The Able & Ambitious Coordinator will work with all staff (though particularly Year Learning Co-ordinators and Heads of Department, Heads of Faculties) to identify, track, support and challenge Able & Ambitious students, including those at risk of under-achieving. Subject departments will maintain individual policies for the identification of, and enrichment provision for, Able and Ambitious children. Such provision will form part of each departmental Subject Development Plan annually and will be formally evaluated each academic year.

The Able & Ambitious Coordinator will be directly accountable to a member of the Senior Leadership team and an appointed Governor responsible for Able & Ambitious student provision.

4. ACADEMIC SCHOOL STRATEGIES

Able and Ambitious students may require a curriculum that exceeds the standard curriculum. Additional provision can be for groups or individuals and can take place within lessons, inside the school day or by enrichment activities (see appendix 2). This will be managed by subject staff, tutors, mentors or outside agencies.

Different strategies will suit different students and different subjects. Subject tutors may employ the following:

- Accelerated learning techniques
- Teaching which takes account of a variety of learning styles and intelligences
- Working with older students

- Provision for A&A students, i.e. A&A Coordinator mentoring or in/outside enrichment provision
- Fast tracking of subject matter
- Extended homework tasks
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Extension activities within the classroom which encourage problem solving and thinking skills
- Enrichment activities within the classroom to expand student knowledge and frames of reference
- Early exam entry
- The use of technology to allow students to effectively access appropriately challenging activities within the mixed ability classroom
- A&A specific Assemblies

Good practice and staff skills will be developed through the use of dedicated INSET sessions, external training i.e. CAMSTAR Action Research directed toward Able & Ambitious students, departmental and faculty meetings and Learning Walks focused on the development of our A&A students.

5. ENRICHMENT PROVISION

The focus of enrichment provision at JCoSS shall be based around the notion of *Smart trips for Smart students*. Enrichment activities will build on and develop opportunities for learning which exist as part of the school-wide curriculum. Students will be encouraged via the Self-Select process to apply or be directed to take part in:

- A wide variety of clubs, societies and enrichment activities in which they can develop particular skills and interests – each Year group to have a whole school self-select enrichment provision, i.e. IGGY Year 8. (see appendix 2)
- Competitions and National challenges, i.e. UKMT, STEM, STEM Faraday Day
- Creative and Performing Arts workshops
- National organisations such as IGGY and NAGC
- External societies and groups which specialise in their field of interest, i.e. The Brilliant Club, IGGY.net
- School Council leadership or Student Parliament
- Musical and Sporting activities
- Extra-curricular clubs, i.e. Spelling bee, Parliament, Debating club, Languages café

6. PERSONAL ASPIRATION DEVELOPMENT

JCoSS is fully aware that without a sense of purpose and direction many A&A students will not link their education pathways. We provide opportunities for our most Able & Ambitious learners to connect career aspiration with their current development by:

- Formal/Informal meetings with the careers advisor
- Ambition Audit – career/higher education aspiration audit bi-yearly throughout school life to track subjects being studied to chosen ambition
- Ambition Assemblies – a focus on progression and aspiration to ‘grow’ the learner for each student to realise their potential
- Family Learning Evenings – enable families to understand how to model positive learning
- Keynote speakers – e.g. PhD students from Russell Group Universities
- Mentoring with A&A Coordinator

7. SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school is aware that any decision relating to the academic achievement and progress of a student needs to be tempered by consideration of the whole child. The implementation of the Able and Ambitious policy will always take account of the impact an action may have on a child's social-emotional development and will give due consideration to:

- Their sense of personal involvement in decisions affecting their schooling
- The need for peer acceptance and credibility
- Their opportunities to develop "trans-intellective" capacities such as empathy and resilience

The school does not wish to create any form of label or badge for student identified as Able and Ambitious. Striving for and rewarding excellence should always be used to draw students together in pursuit of a common aim rather than to divide and isolate. We aim to rid any perceived sub-culture of Able & Ambitious students hiding and being classed a 'swot'. We aim to steer all able students away from being a pigeon-holed group that shy away from being challenged.

8. THE ROLE OF PARENTS AND CARERS

The Jewish ethos of the school promotes discussion and openness. As such, the role of parents and other members of the community in developing well-rounded, successful young people are highly valued at JCoSS. Parents are acknowledged as being holders of vast amounts of information about their children and their input will be sought when identifying students who have the potential for excellence.