High Attainers Policy (2018)
To be reviewed Autumn Term 2020

1. Rationale & Aim
Robert Bloomfield Academy (RBA) has an active philosophy of inclusivity and ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential especially in the areas where their talents lie. Excellence is encouraged from all pupils/students and a rich and challenging curriculum is constantly endorsed.

2. Policy
High attaining pupils are those who achieve, or have the capacity to achieve, significantly above average for a pupil in their year group.

RBA employs a variety of teaching and learning strategies and continues to review schemes of work to ensure that they are sufficiently challenging for the more able pupils. RBA uses a range of systems to track pupils progress to take account of social and pastoral concerns as well as academic progress.

Our aims:
• To create a robust strategy that effectively identifies approximately 10% of pupils as high attainers and which reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of our community.
• To provide all learners with an education matched to their individual learning needs.
• To encourage an ethos that ensures focus on effective teaching and learning.
• To develop depth and breadth of opportunity which recognises the specific social and emotional needs of higher attaining pupils.
• To provide an environment for the development of the whole child: intellectual, spiritual, moral, aesthetic, physical, personal and social; with opportunities to develop specific skills or talents.
• To promote and encourage:
  o Recognition/identification of more able pupils/students
  o Appropriate assessment of ability and monitoring
  o Appropriate assessment of pupil requirements
  o Innovative teaching strategies
  o Incorporation of detailed differentiation in schemes of work.
  o Programmes of enrichment activities
  o Parental support

Identification and assessment
The higher attainers are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. Some do well in statutory national curriculum tests, world-class tests or national qualifications. However, being a high attainer covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations.

RBA’s groups of high attaining pupils will show one or more of:
• A specific aptitude for a curriculum subject
• A specific aptitude within one area of a subject
• Outstanding verbal ability
• High-level practical skills
• Leadership qualities
• Team working abilities
• Physical ability
• General intellectual ability
• Intellectual curiosity
• Initiative/originality
• An ability to memorise swiftly
• Quick and fluid reasoning or learning
• A capacity for creative thought
• Artistic ability
• Social emotional or spiritual qualities

[QCA (2000); H Gardner (1993); D Eyre (1993) etc]
We use a range of strategies for identification. Together these allow meaningful identification of an appropriate cohort:

- Quantitative test data - this can include SATs, QCA, GCSE gradings etc.
- Qualitative information - this includes:
  - Teacher recognition: data from conversations, marking and monitoring, classroom observation
  - Parental or peer nomination
  - Information from feeder schools and outside agencies, predicted progress between key stages, analysis of progress
- External factors such as the nature of support from parents/carers and the experiences at home have a major impact on the development of a pupil/student’s abilities, as do the opportunities that are afforded to the pupil/student at school.

Difficulties in identification

It is important to recognise that not all high attaining learners are obvious achievers. Many actually underachieve - their potential is masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem, lack of challenge or low teacher/parent expectations. Pupil from homes where English is an additional language may struggle to express themselves in school. Others underachieve because they have learning disabilities that obscure or eclipse their gifts or talents. This is known as dual exceptionality. To enable these pupils to fulfil their potential, it is vital to give everyone the opportunity to excel.

Teaching and learning

At the heart of the provision for high attaining pupils will be what happens in the classroom, in every lesson, on every day. **This is the direct responsibility of every class teacher.** Classrooms should be places where learners are inspired, encouraged and challenged to question, speculate and hypothesise. Teachers will acknowledge pupils different learning styles by aiming to include visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities in every lesson. The challenge for teachers is to make every lesson motivating and engaging, and to ensure that every child is stretched.

When planning and delivering lessons teachers will consider how the needs of high attaining pupils might be met through:

- Open ended activities and investigation
- Ambitious expectation
- Enrichment
- Extension
- Pupil mentoring

Schemes of work and departmental planning should provide learning programmes and resources to cater for the needs of high attaining pupils. We will provide a curriculum and learning experience that is broad and available to all learners and, in addition to formal lessons, this will include:

- A range of extra-curricular activities that enable all learners to develop their particular talents, e.g. sport, music, art & ICT.
- Managing whole school resources e.g. library, ICT, art to allow learners to follow and develop particular interests.
- More curriculum provision in different subjects.
- Events and visits organised and arranged for High Attaining pupils.

Role of RBA

It is the responsibility of RBA to identify high attaining learners, to maintain a register of these pupils and to establish an ethos and provision through which exceptional ability in all its forms is recognised, valued and celebrated. We will ensure that higher level targets are set at each stage to ensure that the needs of high attaining pupils/students are met.
Role of the Governors
Our Governors, in their role as ‘critical friends’ have a special responsibility for ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met. They set the strategy which our policy is shaped and ensure that its implementation is monitored and evaluated. We assist them in doing this by providing data on the progress of the high attaining learners and involving them fully in policy marking and review. The governing body appoints a named governor for high attainers who liaise with the Vice Principal inclusion and the High Attainer Coordinator to develop and monitor provision.

Role of the Principal and Senior Leaders
Principals and senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that:
• The curriculum meets the needs of individual learners, including those who are high attainers.
• Sufficient resources, support, training and status are provided to the high attainers coordinator.
• There is a whole Academy commitment to, and support for, high attainers learners.
• Lead the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the school’s policy for high attaining pupils, linking it with existing policies.
• Coordinate provision for high attaining pupils within the Academy
• Ensure that records are kept up to date and are passed on to receiving (new) schools.
• Monitor and evaluate the performance of the high attaining cohort, including analysis of data, and devise strategies to address issues identified.
• There is a school policy for high attainers that provides a clear framework for subject policies or guidelines.
• That the register of high attaining pupils is updated in line with the requirements of the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) form.

Role of the High Attainers Coordinator
The role of the High Attainers Coordinator is to support and challenge colleagues to meet these needs within particular classes and subjects and to promote good practice within the academy. The coordinator is well supported by the Academy’s senior leaders, has the authority to move things forward throughout the Academy and is given time for their work as high attainers coordinator. The coordinator should:
• Act as the ‘Champion’ of able and talented pupils by creating and sustaining positive attitudes towards them, establishing a shared understanding of their academic, social and emotional needs and ensuring that all able pupils/students receive the right blend of challenge and support.
• Ensure that identification procedures are in place and are understood and implemented consistently by all staff throughout the Academy.
• Ensure that registers of high attaining pupils are completed, maintained and made available to staff as appropriate.
• Identify and promote teaching and learning opportunities within and across the curriculum and support colleagues in devising explicit activities including enrichment activities.
• Research and identify appropriate resources for high attaining pupils/students and advise and/or offer staff appropriate in-service opportunities regarding their use.
• Work with allocated Mentors, or other appropriate Academy personnel, to address the needs of underachieving and/or disadvantaged pupils who have been referred.
• Maintain and develop staff awareness of high attainer issues, identify development needs and seek appropriate training opportunities.
• Keep all interested parties, including parents, staff and the Governing Body (through the link governor for high attainers) informed of relevant activities and initiatives.

Role of Head of Department
These leaders will ensure that good provision is made for high attaining pupils/students through their support and monitoring of teachers’ planning, schemes of work and the performance of pupils.

Role of the teacher
The teacher is at the heart of RBA’s provision for high attaining pupils/students. RBA’s teachers cultivate effective learning environments by:
• Providing suitably challenging activities and questions to extend the core learning tasks.
• Encouraging pupils to take risks, to play with ideas and to regard all answers, whether right or wrong, as productive opportunities for learning.
• Consulting with high attaining pupils on their preferred learning styles and planning for these.
• Providing rigorous and constructive feedback to pupils on their work.
• Looking for opportunities to widen the scope of learning activities beyond the Academy and the classroom.

**Role of the pupil/student**
RBA’s pupils are involved in articulating what helps them to be effective learners. They are given opportunities to:
• Develop the language to discuss the process of their learning.
• Raise their awareness of their own preferred learning styles.
• Participate in setting targets for learning including how they will evaluate the outcomes.

These approaches enable pupils to develop strategies for working successfully within a range of contexts so that they become more diverse and effective learners.

**Liaison with Parents/Carers**
RBA actively encourage parents/carers to inform the academy of their child’s specific accomplishments and skills achieved outside school, so that we can recognise and build on these strengths within the curriculum.

It may arise that a child is identified in the top 5–10% in a school but, on transfer to a different school, no longer falls into that band of ability and is, therefore, no longer on the school’s high attainers register. However, differentiated classroom experiences are part of every-day teaching and extracurricular activities are rarely restricted to members of a high attainers register.

3. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
RBA’s policy for high attainers is reviewed biannually to ensure that our pupils/students are realising their capabilities. Essential components of our monitoring include:
• The use being made of assessment data to provide appropriate learning for high attaining pupils/students.
• Regular review of the progress of the high attaining cohort.
• The effectiveness of pupil/student tracking and interviews.

4. **Implementation and Review**
This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, and published on the RBA website. Copies are also available upon request from the Academy office. This policy will be reviewed two yearly or as required.

Staff training needs are identified through:
• Performance management.
• Departmental meetings.
• School Improvement Plan.

5. **Author and Date**

Author: P Edwards (High Attainer Coordinator)   Approved by Curriculum & Standards Committee
Date: Feb 2018