

Frequently Asked Questions

How are more able and talented students identified?

Students are identified in a variety of ways. Academic gifts come to light through discussions with parents, information from previous schools, performance in tests and examinations and through teacher observation. All students in year 7 sit a Cognitive Ability Test (CAT) which enables the school to determine their overall academic ability.



Students with particular talents for sport, music or drama, for example, are identified by subject teachers or form tutors. Parents and students themselves will often let the school know about particular interests and students survey' as part of their induction.

What provision is made for more able and talented students in lessons?

Provision depends on the interests and aptitudes of particular students. Students who are talented in music or drama, for example, will be encouraged to pursue their talents outside of the classroom as well as being extended and stretched in lessons.

Teachers are asked to work with more able students in a variety of ways, but the overall strategy to enable them to make progress is fourfold:



- More: Students could be given more materials to process or asked to extend their thinking. This will not be more of the same, but instead extension into new areas or higher-level thinking.
- Less: Students could be given less support, guidance and structure. The idea of this is that students feel encouraged to develop the ability to think for themselves and work independently. This is managed step by step.
- First: Students might be asked to lead small groups or answer questions first and in a higher level or detail. Taking the lead and teaching others help students to develop their thinking.
- Finest: Students could be asked to reach the next stage of achievement, for example GCSE work for KS3 students. They would need to know what this kind of work looks like. There are displays in classrooms that demonstrate A\* work.

What are the key skills which more able and talented students are seeking to develop?

The school believes that MAT students need to show resilience, confidence and independence. This means that they themselves need to enjoy overcoming obstacles and working through problems. They are not just aware of the criteria for the top grades, but they work with them and own them. MAT students in particular subjects will usually show flair and originality.

How do teachers encourage MAT students to develop their abilities and talents?

All teachers are expected to share their passion and interests for their subjects with students. It is often this passion which encourages students to pursue the subject to a higher level. Teachers at Woodbridge are expected to model what A\* work looks like: this could be through writing with MAT students, using a variety of examples or encouraging extra reading. Teachers will try to apply the learning to real-life situations and engage MAT students in application of knowledge and skills to problem solving.



How will MAT students be challenged?

The chief method available to teachers to challenge students is by questioning. Questioning is the teachers' tool to develop understanding. Teachers will select the questions they use carefully, targeting them at particular students.

The types of questions which MAT students might be asked are open ended and need to be proven using evidence.

What kind of feedback are MAT students given?

All students are given advice in their marked work. Teachers might use the grading or marking criteria from the next key stage. Students will be encouraged to reflect carefully on completed work and response will always be acknowledged. Students are prompted to reply to teachers to develop their subject discussions.

What opportunities are available for students to complete additional examinations?

If appropriate, students are stretched through entry for additional examinations. This only happens where the school feels that the students in question will achieve their best result. For example year 11 mathematics students might study a free-standing qualification in Additional Mathematics which acts as a bridge to A Level.





What extra-curricular opportunities are available?

As well as encouraging students to develop their talents through extra-curricular activities, there is specific provision in place for students who show aptitude to achieve in the top 10% of the year group.

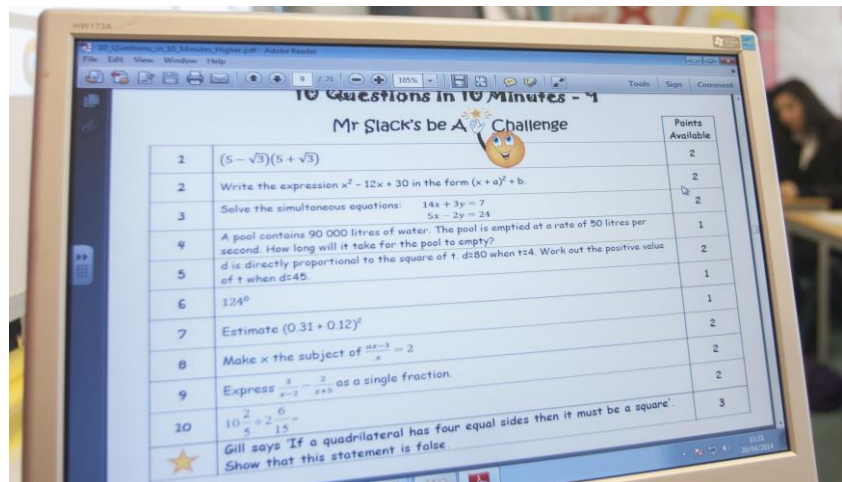
How are students supported to apply for Russell Group universities and Oxbridge?

The full programme includes assemblies, visiting speakers, trips to university events each year and a series of Period 6 lessons, which are tailored to the skills they need to prepare for Russell Group Universities and other centres of excellence. Each year has an appropriate focus.

- Year 7 BeMAT Workshops in English, Maths And Science
- Year 8 Languages, Group work and Creativity
- Year 9 A Level Tasters: Researching and Presenting
- Year 10 Aiming for 5A\*s
- Year 11 'The Subject Matters' at Cambridge
- Year 12 UCAS Personal Statements for Russell Group Universities
- Year 13 Academic Mentors and interview practice for Russell Group University Applicants

How can I do more to support my child developing their academic gift?

We know that students who thrive academically are getting constant and varied support from home. From the very earliest age, parents are looking for opportunities to stimulate and foster interests and skills. Talking to teenagers can be difficult at times, but the more experiences and the more active participation they have in academically rich experiences, the better. It's never too early to start.



Who can I contact for more information?

If you have questions about a particular subject, you should contact the subject teacher in the first instance. For general questions about the help we give to more able and talented students, contact:

Veronica Geary, Lead Practitioner  
 Steven Hogan, Deputy Head Teacher