

# Guidance on the Identification of MAT Pupils

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St John's College, Cardiff

## GUIDANCE ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF MAT PUPILS

**This policy applies to the following section/s of the School:**  
Sixth Form and Senior School.

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## General Checklist

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More able and talented pupils are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. However, they are more likely than most pupils to:

- ✓ think quickly and accurately;
- ✓ work systematically;
- ✓ generate creative working solutions;
- ✓ work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations;
- ✓ communicate their thoughts and ideas well;
- ✓ be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns;
- ✓ achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts;
- ✓ be particularly creative;
- ✓ show great sensitivity or empathy;
- ✓ demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill;
- ✓ make sound judgements;
- ✓ be outstanding leaders or team members;
- ✓ be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum
- ✓ demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspects of work;
- ✓ be socially adept;

# English

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## **Creative flair**

- ✓ writing or talking in imaginative and coherent ways;
- ✓ elaborating on and organising content to an extent that is exceptional for their age;
- ✓ displaying stamina and perseverance;
- ✓ using any suitable opportunities to produce work that is substantial and obviously the product of sustained, well-directed effort;

## **Communicative skills**

- ✓ involving and keeping the attention of an audience by exploiting the dramatic or humorous potential of ideas or situations in imaginative ways;
- ✓ taking a guiding role in helping a group to achieve its shared goals, while showing sensitivity to the participation of others;
- ✓ writing with a flair for metaphorical or poetic expression;
- ✓ grasping the essence of particular styles and adapting them to their own purposes;
- ✓ expressing ideas succinctly and elegantly, in ways that reflect an appreciation of the knowledge and interests of specific audiences;
- ✓ using ICT to research ideas and create new text;

## **Ability to take on demanding tasks**

- ✓ researching, comparing and synthesising information from a range of different sources, including ICT;
- ✓ engaging seriously and creatively with moral and social themes expressed in literature;

## **Arguing and reasoning**

- ✓ creating and sustaining accounts and reasoned arguments at a relatively abstract or hypothetical level, in both spoken and written language;
- ✓ grasping the essence of any content and reorganising it in ways that are logical and offer new syntheses or insights;
- ✓ justifying opinions convincingly, using questions and other forms of enquiry to elicit information and taking up or challenging others' points of view;

## **Awareness of language**

- ✓ understanding the nature of language and showing a special awareness of features such as rhyme, intonation or accent in spoken language, and the grammatical organisation of written texts;
- ✓ showing an interest and enthusiasm for language study, including an awareness of the relationship between the sounds and words of different languages that are not apparent to most of their peers.

## Mathematics

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- ✓ learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly;
- ✓ work systematically and accurately;
- ✓ be highly analytical;
- ✓ think logically and see mathematical relationships;
- ✓ make connections between the concepts they have learned;
- ✓ identify patterns easily;
- ✓ apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts;
- ✓ communicate their reasoning and justify their methods;
- ✓ ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics;
- ✓ take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems;
- ✓ sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions;
- ✓ be more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry.

## Science

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- ✓ be imaginative;
- ✓ be extremely interested in finding out more about themselves and things around them, going beyond the standard curriculum;
- ✓ enjoy researching and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena;
- ✓ be able to sustain their interest and go beyond an obvious answer to underlying mechanisms and greater depth;
- ✓ be inquisitive about how things work and why things happen (they may be dissatisfied with simplified explanations and insufficient detail);
- ✓ use different strategies for finding things out (practical and intellectual) -- they may be able to miss out steps when reasoning the answers to problems;
- ✓ think logically, providing plausible explanations for phenomena (they may be methodical in their thinking, but not in their recording);
- ✓ put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions (including their teacher's!);
- ✓ decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables;
- ✓ consider alternative suggestions and strategies for investigations;
- ✓ analyse data or observations and spot patterns easily;
- ✓ strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts, and take pleasure, for example, from reading gauges as accurately as possible (sometimes beyond the accuracy of the instrument);
- ✓ make connections quickly between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers;
- ✓ display higher order thinking skills;
- ✓ think abstractly at an earlier age than usual and understand models and use modelling to explain ideas and observations. For example, key stage 3 pupils may be willing to apply abstract ideas in new situations; key stage 4 pupils may be able to use higher-order mathematical skills such as proportionality, ratio and equilibrium with some complex abstract ideas when offering explanations;
- ✓ understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence;
- ✓ be easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas;
- ✓ enjoy challenges and problem solving, while often being self-critical;
- ✓ enjoy talking to the teacher about new information or ideas;
- ✓ be self-motivated, willingly putting in extra time (but they may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly);
- ✓ show intense interest in one particular area of science (such as astrophysics), to the exclusion of other topics.

# Business Studies

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## **Exceptional Academic Performance**

- ✓ MAT students have the potential to achieve high grades in Business Studies, demonstrating a deep understanding of key concepts and their application;
- ✓ Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills
- ✓ MAT students exhibit advanced critical thinking and analytical skills, evidenced through their ability to critically evaluate business theories, concepts, and case studies;
- ✓ they demonstrate a capacity to analyse complex business scenarios, identify patterns, and propose innovative solutions;

## **Independent Learning and Research**

- ✓ MAT students display a proactive approach to learning, engaging in independent research beyond the standard curriculum;
- ✓ they demonstrate intellectual curiosity by seeking out additional resources, attending relevant workshops or seminars, and pursuing extended reading;

## **Effective Communication and Presentation Skills**

- ✓ MAT students communicate their ideas effectively and persuasively, both verbally and in writing;
- ✓ they are confident presenters, capable of articulating complex business concepts and insights to peers and teachers;

## **Leadership Potential and Initiative**

- ✓ MAT students show leadership potential by taking on leadership roles within group projects, extracurricular activities, or business-related initiatives;
- ✓ they exhibit initiative in proposing and implementing innovative business ideas or projects, demonstrating entrepreneurial spirit.

## DT

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- ✓ demonstrate high levels of technological understanding and application;
- ✓ display high-quality making and precise practical skills;
- ✓ have flashes of inspiration and highly original or innovative ideas;
- ✓ demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues;
- ✓ be sensitive to aesthetic, social and cultural issues when designing and evaluating;
- ✓ be capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products;
- ✓ get frustrated when a teacher demands that they follow a rigid design-and-make process;
- ✓ work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience and empathise with users' and clients' needs and wants;
- ✓ shows a willingness to take risks and experiment with new materials and techniques;
- ✓ successfully translates theoretical knowledge into practical applications in their projects;
- ✓ demonstrates determination and persistence when faced with difficult tasks or setbacks;
- ✓ actively seeks and constructively uses feedback to improve their work;
- ✓ produces work of exceptional quality that often exceeds expectations;
- ✓ achieves recognition in school, local, or national competitions related to design and technology (E.g. F1 in Schools / EESW Engineering Project);
- ✓ engages in iterative development, showing a clear process of prototyping, testing, and refining designs;
- ✓ works independently and takes initiative in their learning and project development;
- ✓ applies advanced design thinking processes to develop sophisticated and practical solutions;
- ✓ integrates information from various texts to form well-rounded and informed design ideas;
- ✓ assesses the credibility and relevance of different sources of information, selecting those that are most appropriate for their needs;
- ✓ shows a keen interest in reading materials related to design technology, often reading beyond the curriculum;
- ✓ reads a wide variety of texts, including technical documents, design journals, and historical texts related to design technology;

## Computer Science

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- ✓ display computing proficiency significantly above the expected level for their age group. For example, students in Key Stage 3 may adeptly engage with the Key Stage 4 computing curriculum;
- ✓ demonstrate swift acquisition and application of new computing skills. For example, mastering coding languages and leveraging them to develop innovative solutions;
- ✓ confidently apply learned computing skills and techniques in diverse contexts. For example, applying computational thinking and algorithmic design techniques learned in mathematics to scientific investigations or real-world problem-solving scenarios;
- ✓ independently pursue computing exploration beyond the prescribed curriculum. For example, autonomously seeking out online resources and engaging in self-directed learning to expand their computing knowledge and skills;
- ✓ demonstrate initiative in problem-solving and creatively applying computing to address personal interests and needs. For example, developing interactive applications, coding projects, or digital solutions, either individually or collaboratively with peers, utilising computational thinking approaches.



# Economics

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## **Exceptional Academic Performance**

- ✓ MAT students have the potential to achieve high grades in Economics, demonstrating a deep understanding of economic theories, principles, and their application;

## **Advanced Analytical and Problem Solving Skills**

- ✓ MAT students exhibit advanced analytical and problem-solving skills, evidenced through their ability to critically evaluate economic data, models, and real-world scenarios;
- ✓ they demonstrate a capacity to apply economic concepts to complex situations, analyse policy implications, and propose reasoned arguments;

## **Independent Research and Engagement**

- ✓ MAT students display a proactive approach to learning, engaging in independent research beyond the standard curriculum;
- ✓ they demonstrate intellectual curiosity by exploring contemporary economic issues, reading academic journals, attending relevant seminars or conferences, and participating in online forums or debates;

## **Effective Communication and Debate Skills**

- ✓ MAT students communicate their ideas effectively and persuasively, both verbally and in writing;
- ✓ they excel in class discussions, debates, and presentations, articulating complex economic ideas with clarity and confidence.;

## **Leadership Potential and Initiative**

- ✓ MAT students show initiative in initiating and leading group discussions, projects, or initiatives related to economics;
- ✓ they demonstrate leadership potential through their ability to inspire and influence their peers, contribute innovative ideas, and take on leadership roles within extracurricular activities or community projects.

## History and Government & Politics

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- ✓ be highly engaged independent learners;
- ✓ show resourcefulness, flexibility, determination, creativity and innovation in their studies;
- ✓ grasp disciplinary concepts and skills easily in addition to reasoning and problem solving and utilise them in various and transferable contexts;
- ✓ have an extensive knowledge and understanding of historical and or political events;
- ✓ use subject-specific vocabulary confidently;
- ✓ be able to work thematically as well as chronologically and to understand the implications of the actual contextual framework;
- ✓ select, organise and deploy a wide range of relevant historical and or political information to produce consistently well-structured narratives, descriptions and explanations, making appropriate use of dates and a range of sophisticated specialist terms;
- ✓ thrive on controversy, mystery, the otherness of the past and the changing nature of evidence and or political change;
- ✓ interpret and synthesise historical and or political information to further their understanding of the world around them;
- ✓ recognise that conclusions can be partial, inconclusive or open to different interpretations;
- ✓ make connections within and across periods. Make connections between individuals and events in local, national and international contexts;
- ✓ show an appreciation of identity, heritage and cynefin;
- ✓ understand the complex, pluralistic and diverse nature of societies, past and present and the diversity of experiences and stories;
- ✓ be confident in expressing and justifying beliefs that may not necessarily be accepted by their peers or teachers;
- ✓ make well-considered choices about how and what they learn. Are able to evaluate their own progress robustly, to be reflective learners and know what to do to improve their work and how to action it;
- ✓ develop a keen sense of responsibility for progressing their own learning;
- ✓ are responsible, informed, ethical global citizens who critically reflect on their own and others' beliefs, values and attitudes within a local, national and global context.

# Geography

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- ✓ understand concepts clearly so that they can apply this understanding to new situations in order to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions they understand geographical ideas and theories, and apply them to real situations;
- ✓ communicate effectively - using both the written and spoken word they communicate knowledge, ideas and understanding in ways that are appropriate to the task and audience (for example, writing formal letters and reports, producing brochures representing particular groups). They learn subject specific vocabulary, use it accurately and are able to define words;
- ✓ reason, argue and think logically, showing an ability to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences they use and apply mathematical principles (such as area, shape, spatial distribution) and formulae (such as Spearman's rank correlation coefficient) to solve geographical tasks and problems. They identify their own geographical questions and establish sequences of investigation. They understand, and are able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships (for example, within and between physical and human environments);
- ✓ enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information they transform relief shown by contour lines into three-dimensional models in their minds. They are competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required in geography -- aerial photographs, satellite images, maps of different types and scales, GIS systems and so on;
- ✓ be confident and contribute effectively when taking part in less formal teaching situations they take part readily in role-play situations or simulations and enjoy contributing to outdoor fieldwork;
- ✓ relate well to other people, showing an ability to lead, manage and influence others, appreciating and understanding others' views, attitudes and feelings. They are willing to share their knowledge and understanding, and steer discussion;
- ✓ have a more highly developed value system than most pupils of their age they have well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and the inequalities of life in different places;
- ✓ have a wide-ranging general knowledge about the world they have good knowledge of where places are in the world and of topical issues;
- ✓ be able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another, for example, they transfer knowledge of the industrial revolution from history to help explain the location of industry in the UK;
- ✓ be creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solution to a problem, for example, if faced with the problem of storm pipes being unable to cope with sudden storm surges in an area, they might suggest taking measures like afforestation to reduce storm surges, rather than proposing technical improvements to the pipe system.

## Languages (Welsh, MFL and Latin)

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- ✓ have a strong desire to put language together by themselves; they apply principles from what they have learned to new situations, transforming phrases and using them in a different context, often with humour;
- ✓ show creativity and imagination when using language, they often extend the boundaries of their knowledge and work beyond what they have learned, not wishing simply to respond and imitate, but to initiate exchanges and to create new language;
- ✓ have a natural feel for languages they are willing to take risks and see what works, knowing instinctively what sounds right and what looks right; they are acutely and swiftly aware of the relationship between sound and spelling;
- ✓ pick up new language and structures quickly; they may have excellent aural and oral skills and may be able to cope with rapid streams of sound and identify key words at an early stage; they may also display outstanding powers of retention, both immediately and from one lesson to the next
- ✓ make connections and classify words and structures to help them learn more efficiently; they are able to evaluate new language critically, recognising the grammatical function of words;
- ✓ seek solutions and ask further questions they may test out their theories and seek to solve linguistic problems, sometimes challenging the tasks set and trying to understand their relevance to the language-learning process;
- ✓ have an insight into their own learning style and preference; they may say how they like to learn vocabulary or structures; they are clear about the type of tasks they like doing; they may show or display an ability to work independently, without supervision, and to make effective use of reference material;
- ✓ show an intense interest in the cultural features of the language being studied; they may use idiom in the language itself and explore the history and the traditions of the language; some pupils may wish to share their knowledge with their peers.

## Art

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- ✓ think and express themselves in creative, original ways; they want to follow a different plan to the other pupils, challenge the tasks given, or extend the brief in seemingly unrelated or fantastic directions;
- ✓ have a strong desire to create in a visual form; they are driven by ideas, imagination, flights of fancy, humanitarian concerns, humour or personal experience; they persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher;
- ✓ push the boundaries of normal processes; they test ideas and solve problems relating to concepts and issues; they explore ways to depict ideas, emotions, feelings and meanings; they take risks without knowing what the outcome will be; they change ideas to take into account new influences or outcomes;
- ✓ show a passionate interest in the world of art and design; they are often interested in a specific culture (possibly relating to their own cultural background or sense of identity), particular art forms, contemporary culture or youth culture;
- ✓ use materials, tools and techniques skilfully and learn new approaches easily; they are keen to extend their technical abilities and sometimes get frustrated when other skills do not develop at the same time;
- ✓ initiate ideas and define problems; they explore ideas, problems and sources on their own and collaboratively, with a sense of purpose and meaning;
- ✓ critically evaluate visual work and other information; they make unusual connections between their own and others' work; they apply ideas to their own work in innovative ways;
- ✓ exploit the characteristics of materials and processes; they use materials and processes in creative, practical and inventive ways; they explore alternatives and respond to new possibilities and meanings;
- ✓ understand that ideas and meanings in their own and others' work can be interpreted in different ways; they use their knowledge and understanding to extend their own thinking and realise their intentions; they communicate original ideas, insights and views.

## Music

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- ✓ be captivated by sound and engage fully with music;
- ✓ select an instrument with care and then be unwilling to relinquish the instrument;
- ✓ find it difficult not to respond physically to music;
- ✓ memorise music quickly without any apparent effort, be able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after one hearing);
- ✓ sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase - the music makes sense;
- ✓ demonstrate the ability to communicate through music, for example to sing with musical expression and with confidence;
- ✓ show strong preferences, single-mindedness and a sustained inner drive to make music.

Pupils more often show their musical talent through the quality of their response than the complexity of their response. Musical quality is very difficult to define in words, as music is a different form of communication to language. The closest we can get is to say that it 'sounds right'; skills and techniques are used to communicate an intended mood or effect. Therefore, musical talent is at least as much about demonstrating a higher quality response within levels as about attainment at higher levels. Musical talent can be seen at every level of attainment.

Pupils who have a talent for music show a particular affinity with sound. This type of talent is sometimes hard to identify, especially when it is not combined with more general giftedness. It is however often most significant, since it may be a pupil's only route to real success, increasing their self-esteem and motivation for other areas of learning.

## RS

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- ✓ show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary;
- ✓ make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- ✓ be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- ✓ understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts.
- ✓ have highly-developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research;
- ✓ show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

The identification of pupils who are gifted in RE should be approached on the basis of distinct RE ability, skills, competencies and insights. The teacher's professional judgement is crucial. RE teachers who know their pupils and their work, and bring professional talent, expertise and awareness to the subject, are best placed to identify gifted pupils. However, especially if not RE specialists themselves, they will probably find it helpful to talk to other teachers.

# PE

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## **Approach to work**

- ✓ be confident in themselves and in familiar contexts;
- ✓ take risks with ideas and approaches, and be able to think 'outside the box';
- ✓ show a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance.

## **Effective performance**

- ✓ be intelligent, independent, thoughtful performers, actively forming and adapting strategies, tactics or compositions;
- ✓ be able to reflect on processes and outcomes in order to improve performance, understanding the close and changing relationship between skill, fitness and the tactics or composition of their performance;
- ✓ be good decision-makers and able to take the initiative, often showing high levels of autonomy, independence and leadership;
- ✓ be creative, original and adaptable, responding quickly to new challenges and situations, and often finding new and innovative solutions to them.

## **Body skilfulness and awareness**

- ✓ have a high degree of control and coordination of their bodies;
- ✓ show strong awareness of their body in space;
- ✓ combine movements fluently, precisely and accurately in a range of contexts and activities.

## **General**

- ✓ evaluating and improving performance through leadership;
- ✓ acquiring, developing and performing advanced skills and techniques;
- ✓ conceptual understanding, shown through the sophisticated selection and application of advanced skills, tactics and compositional ideas for their age;
- ✓ particularly high levels of fitness for their age, in both specific and general areas such as games activities or dance activities.