Policy:	**Preventing Underachievement for Key Groups**
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Authorised by:	**Governing Body**
Updated by:	**Mr C Edwards**

NOTE: This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies: Teaching and Learning, SEND and Equalities.

Introduction

The Cotswold School's mission statement is 'The pursuit of excellence and individual achievement within a caring community'. A natural outcome of this belief is that we should put in place strategies to identify and address underachievement where it exists.

A significant and long-term strength of our school is that the gaps in achievement and attainment of different groups are already either small, closing rapidly or better than most schools nationally. However, we recognise that there may be a risk of underachievement for some groups of young people when compared to their peers and that constant attention should be given to the development of knowledge, skills and strategies to recognise any potential risks and take appropriate action to swiftly mitigate any possible disadvantage.

Recent research suggests that the most effective action to close gaps in achievement and attainment is delivered through enhanced staff awareness and consistently excellent teaching and learning experiences including, where needed, timely additional intervention.

Whilst we appreciate that there are many variables that may result in underachievement for individual students, we recognise that there are some key groups of learners which all schools are required to monitor closely. These groups, some of whom we receive extra funding for, are listed below:

- Children eligible for Free School Meals currently or within the past six years (FSMe6)
- Children within the Care System (LAC/CIN)
- Children of families serving in the Armed Forces (SCP)
- Children who did not attain national benchmarks at the end of KS2
- Gender-specific groups to ensure equality of achievement and attainment for boys and girls
- Children with English as an additional language
- Children from a Roma/Gypsy/Traveller background
- Children with Special Educational Needs including those under the protection of an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

We recognise that some children may belong to a combination of the groups listed above and that, as a result of this, may be at greater risk of underachievement than their peers. We expect all teachers to understand the possible risks for each group and to use quality first teaching processes (see examples below) to ensure that progress is secure for all pupils within their care. Our whole-school data-tracking and assessment processes, coupled with regular teacher monitoring and team scrutiny of progress and achievement for all pupils is used to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well at The Cotswold School.

1. Teaching and Learning and Assessment Strategies

- Have high expectations.
- Select work which will capture their imagination. Describe ordinary tasks in exciting ways. Choose resource materials carefully – role models must be representative of key groups and positive.
- Share learning objectives and assessment criteria – introduce them at start of lesson, reinforce during, revisit at end. Give pupils the strategies they need to meet these objectives.
- Encourage the articulation of learning objectives and assessment criteria – to you and each other.
- Set ambitious but achievable challenges.
- Show pupils examples of good work. Display examples of good work in your room. Articulate how these examples meet assessment criteria.
- Use concise instructions and short time frames. Use competition and short-term goals.
- Use a variety of learning styles – visual, aural and kinaesthetic.
- Use ICT where possible.
- Think carefully about groupings – mix gender / ability / social groups.
- Use peer support for learning.
- Share assessment criteria – KS3 levels / GCSE grade criteria - with pupils at every opportunity. Use formative assessment to negotiate challenging but achievable short-term targets, referring to KS3 level and GCSE grade criteria. Use baseline data to negotiate challenging but achievable medium-term targets.
- Encourage pupil self-assessment – allow pupils to measure their work against learning / assessment objectives. Allow time for reflection and review.
- Assess content and presentation separately – do not confuse the quality of ideas with the quality of the handwriting. Reward content and presentation separately.
- Give regular feedback about progress and rewards.

2. Classroom Management

- Set clear limits and have high expectations; be strong and consistent.
- Show humour and reward good work (perhaps discreetly).
- Use a boy / girl seating plan – or be prepared to justify an alternative.

3. Promote Literacy

- All teachers are literacy teachers.
- Give lists of key subject-specific vocabulary.
- Support writing with frames or scaffolds where appropriate.
- Use modelling where possible.
- Support reading and do not assume pupils can access text or written instructions.
- Check accessibility of textbooks and worksheets.
- Build a literacy strand into formative assessment and alter teaching / set targets as appropriate.

> This policy is written and administered with due regard to our duty and commitment as a school: to consider all aspects of equality and diversity.

_____ (*08-10-2018*)
ratified by Governors and
signed as such by The Chair of Governors