

CHALLENGE POLICY

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WHY DO WE CELEBRATE CHALLENGE AT THE MANOR?

At The Manor, we believe that challenge is an essential part of education. It is through challenge that children feel the buzz of understanding something new. They develop curiosity, critical thinking and a lifelong love of learning.

Our approach to incorporating and celebrating challenge is wide ranging, ensuring that each pupil is engaged, motivated and supported in their learning journey. Through experience of an ambitious and highly-motivating curriculum, alongside diverse and inspiring enrichment opportunities, we are committed to ensuring that our pupils develop self-belief, a positive attitude, and an awareness that learning must be effortful to be effective.

This policy underpins our school aims to challenge, cherish and inspire every child to give them the best possible start. It is also an integral part of our belief in inclusion of educational opportunity for everyone, and our commitment to provide an environment in which all children are enabled to think deeply and extend their learning. As such, this policy is directly linked to our School Development Plan, our Teaching and Learning Policy, Curriculum Policy, SEND/Learning Support Policy, EAL Policy, Assessment Policy, internal subject specific handbooks, and the continuous professional development of teaching staff.

WHAT IS CHALLENGE AT THE MANOR?

The concept of challenge at The Manor is rooted in the belief that every child can achieve their full potential when provided with the right opportunities and support. Challenge is not about presenting pupils with insurmountable tasks, but rather about fostering a growth mindset where they feel confident to take risks, learn from mistakes, and celebrate achievements. It requires mental and/or physical effort to be successful and unlock deeper thinking and better outcomes.

We hope to inspire children to step out of their comfort zone and engage with new ideas and complex problems. They are encouraged to understand that the harder they think, the more they will learn, and that this is something to feel excited about.

As part of our ethos of challenge for all, we are well-equipped to meet the needs of highly able children. Our culture of high expectations and aspirational goals naturally includes opportunities for such children to be challenged and inspired to make excellent progress. Within this, they may also be asked to complete work at pace and explore extra challenge or adaptive activities. Further information regarding highly able children is set out in the relevant section below.

HOW DO WE CHALLENGE?

At The Manor, challenging our pupils is about nurturing their potential and preparing them for their future. By embedding challenge into every aspect of our approach, we empower the children to become resilient, independent thinkers who are ready to meet the demands of an ever-changing world. Equally importantly, the children feel excited about their learning every step of the way.

To effectively deliver challenge, we employ a variety of approaches that cater for the needs and abilities of all our pupils. Our teachers are skilled in working towards ambitious objectives, ensuring all of the pupils achieve more through individual support with an appropriate level of difficulty for each child.

Whilst challenge may not look the same in every classroom as each member of staff uses their own skills, knowledge and interests to personalise learning for their class, key school-wide strategies include:

- **Supportive environment**

Our teachers are committed to creating a supportive environment where pupils feel safe to express their ideas and take intellectual risks. Members of staff model learning from mistakes and correcting misconceptions, and address any fears of getting something wrong. 'Hazard' boards are used to illustrate common mistakes to avoid; this encourages children to take greater responsibility for their learning by identifying where they might go wrong.

Regular constructive feedback and praise are integral to helping children navigate challenges and build confidence in their abilities. They are given individual targets, and asked to reflect and self-assess their own work to help them take ownership of their learning. Independent learning and perseverance are promoted, as is the belief we can always strive to improve. 'Learning Powers' such as 'Go For It Gorilla' and 'Persevering Parrot' are referred to in the younger years.

As set out in our Pastoral Care Policy, support is also given through outstanding pastoral care and the personal, emotional, social, moral and spiritual development of each pupil.

- **Challenging learning opportunities**

Our balanced curriculum incorporates fun and compelling contexts for learning with multi-solution problems and open-ended enquiry-based investigations. Tools such as mindmaps are used to gather children's existing knowledge on which to build. Cross curricular links help consolidate understanding and motivate pupils.

Teachers provide tasks that develop critical thinking, with the emphasis on increasing the depth before breadth of the curriculum. Children are encouraged to ask questions, select their own level of challenge and explore topics in detail. This empowers pupils to make their own choices and pursue areas of interest with creativity and determination.

Based on educational research, we believe that a fundamental principle to providing appropriate challenge for all is to 'teach to the top'. This involves aiming content at the highly able and then enabling everyone to reach that goal through effective scaffolded support, for example breaking tasks into smaller steps, pre-teaching vocabulary or using visual aids. By

identifying our highly able children and determining what should be expected of them, we can adapt our teaching to enable every child to aim for those expectations. Through raising expectations and levels of challenge, we will raise the achievement of all pupils.

To develop metacognition and a love of challenge at The Manor, we also explicitly teach the children in an age appropriate way about the importance of desirable difficulty and working their way through the stages of learning (the 'learning pit') to enable deeper thinking to take place and to enjoy the buzz of learning something new.

- **Rich and extended talk**

Through open and carefully planned questions, children are required to use higher order thinking skills to connect ideas and evaluate, analyse and compare information. They are asked to explain their thoughts and hypothesise, and develop their oracy. Talk partners are often used, which gives children time to formulate, articulate and test their ideas.

Questioning strategies include no hands up, thinking time and a range of question types such as bounced, hinge, wobbler and fermi questions. Common misconceptions are addressed. If pupils say they cannot do something, they are encouraged to add 'yet' to the end of their sentence and explain which areas they are finding tricky.

- **Real-world context**

We connect classroom learning to real-world scenarios, providing pupils with practical applications of their knowledge and stimulating their curiosity. This approach helps them understand the relevance of their studies and see the value in overcoming challenges to achieve real-life goals.

- **Collaborative learning**

We promote collaborative learning experiences where pupils work in flexible groups to solve problems and complete projects. This not only creates a sense of community but also enables children to challenge one another, build on each other's learning and share different perspectives. Teamwork and effective communication are skills in high demand when our pupils enter the workforce of the future.

- **Thinking skills**

Thinking skills are promoted throughout the year groups, from puzzles and logic games in the younger years to the inclusion of Verbal/Non-Verbal Reasoning, lateral thinking problems and big questions/thunks in the Year 5/6 curriculum.

HIGHLY ABLE CHILDREN

We aim to foster a whole school culture where performing at a high level is sought after and achievable. A key part of this involves effective identification and monitoring of highly able children and how we provide for and support them.

Identification

Highly able children are those learners who show, or have the potential to show, a particular strength in a subject that makes them stand out at The Manor. We believe that abilities in each area of the curriculum should be identified and nurtured. We recognise that children may be highly able in one area but not in others, and we take into account any SEND/learning support or other needs.

We identify these children by year group and subject from:

- teacher observations and in-class assessments;
- standardised formal assessments (Progress Tests and Cognitive Ability Tests);
- generic and subject-specific identification indicators (see Appendix); and

- any other relevant information such as knowledge of any interests and experience outside of school.

We understand that some children may be achieving academically at a level lower than their cognitive ability suggests. These children can be identified as pupils not reaching their potential or 'underachieving' highly able pupils.

In addition, we may identify as exceptionally able those learners whose ability significantly exceeds highly able children at The Manor. They would demonstrate, or have the potential to demonstrate, extremely high levels of ability when compared to their peers nationally across the entire population.

Once identified, children are placed on the Highly Able Register and Provision Map and noted on our school management system, iSAMS. The Highly Able Register and Provision Map also summarises how we provide for the children in each of the subjects in which they are highly able. Along with iSAMS, it can be accessed by all teachers and support staff. It is a dynamic document which is regularly reviewed and updated as the children progress through the school.

Monitoring

The progress of highly able children is closely monitored by the Head of Challenge for All and Highly Able in collaboration with subject teachers, Heads of Subject, the Head of Assessment and the Deputy Head Academic, including at assessment analysis meetings.

We aim to ensure appropriate provision is in place and to facilitate identification of individual needs and interventions. We also look to identify any emerging highly able children or underachieving highly able children.

ENRICHMENT

We provide numerous extra-curricular clubs and activities before, during and after the school day, allowing for both enrichment and extension across academic and non-academic subjects (for example, PE & Games, Art, D&T, Music and Drama). In addition, we organise various school trips and residentials throughout the year, enter local and national competitions, and often welcome inspirational speakers to visit and run workshops.

There are also a range of school wide initiatives that further enhance the curriculum and celebrate challenge such as:

- Manor value colours and half colours for challenge;
- merits and certificates of excellence;
- assemblies;
- challenge walls and challenge cards in classrooms;
- a wide range of books and current newspapers/magazines in our Library, plus author visits;
- events such as the Dragon's Den Challenge Week, Summer Fete and Poetry Festival;
- ABRSM examinations; and
- House competitions.

Promoting a culture of high expectations, curiosity, and resilience across the school, these initiatives are aimed at embedding challenge into the ethos and day-to-day life of the school, benefiting all learners.

Specific challenge opportunities for highly able children may involve them participating in external events from matches, tournaments and competitions to performances and experience days. Examples include the Junior Maths Challenge, the Oxford University Coding Challenge, IAPS sports tournaments, Young Art Oxford and the D10 Debating Competition.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Manor is committed to extending and developing the skills of all teaching staff in the provision of challenge for all including those who are highly able. The Head of Challenge for All and Highly Able

works closely with the Deputy Head Academic and attends external training and networking events run by NACE (the National Association for Able Children in Education) of which the school is a member.

Up to date educational research, pedagogy and new initiatives are cascaded to teaching staff through INSET days, and individuals can request additional support or training in line with their expertise and interests. Teachers also observe each other and share good practice.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting to the Deputy Head Academic, the Head of Challenge for All and Highly Able oversees this policy and is responsible for:

- promoting challenge for all across the school;
- encouraging staff to reflect on their own practice; and
- co-ordinating the identification and monitoring of highly able children.

All teaching staff have a shared responsibility to provide challenging learning opportunities and a learning environment that results in appropriate levels of progress, attainment and enjoyment for every child. Heads of Subject and Subject Coordinators are responsible for supporting teaching staff and ensuring that appropriate provision is being given in their subject area for all children and specifically highly able children.

LINKED POLICIES

Teaching and Learning Policy
Remote Teaching and Learning Policy
Curriculum Policy
SEND/Learning Support Policy
EAL Policy
Assessment Policy

APPENDIX - HIGHLY ABLE INDICATORS

Highly able learners may display certain characteristics in the following areas:

Subject	Potential Highly Able Indicators
General	<p><u>Personal traits</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas • Quick/agile thinkers • High self-motivation/initiative; can work well independently • Socially adept • Show leadership qualities • Good/unusual sense of humour • Sensitive/sensitivity and empathy with others • Socially immature/isolated; prefer computers to people <p><u>Learning ability</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new ideas and concepts quickly/easily/readily • Good at reasoning/logical/analytical thinking • Good at dealing with abstractions/abstract thinking • See relationships between things; can generalise from specific facts • Good at understanding things/meanings; show unusual insights • Able to memorise quickly/easily • Follow complex directions easily • Keen powers of observation • Advanced vocabulary/verbally fluent/good self-expression • Learned to read early, often before school age; rapid readers • Good attention; concentrate and persevere for long periods if interested <p><u>Learning styles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; get bored easily • Informed/show interest in ideas and concepts beyond their years • Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical • Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps • Many interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects • Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing • Resent imposed timetable restrictions if interested in a task • Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive
Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think and express themselves in creative, original ways • Want to follow a different plan to others, challenge tasks given or extend their brief in seemingly unrelated directions • Enthusiastic and interested in the visual world; have a strong desire to create in the visual form • Driven by ideas and persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher • Take risks without knowing what the outcome will be • Can be quirky and display humour • Interested in the art world, art forms and culture • Analyse and interpret their observations and present them creatively • Work in innovative ways • Enjoy experimenting with materials; able to go beyond the conventional and use materials and processes in creative and practical ways • Communicate original ideas, insights and views • Confidence in using a wide range of tools and techniques skilfully • Keen to extend their technical abilities; sometimes get frustrated when other skills do not develop at the same time • Explore ideas, problems and sources on their own and collaboratively, with

	<p>a sense of purpose and meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make unusual connections between their own work and others' work; this could include peers as well as inspirations from artists past and present ● Critically evaluate visual work and other information
Computing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use and learn about ICT hardware and software quickly, confidently, efficiently and independently ● Demonstrate ICT capability significantly above that expected for their age ● Use ICT to support their studies in other subjects ● Use their skills and knowledge of ICT to solve problems, design information systems and suggest improvements to existing systems ● Consider the limitations of ICT tools and information sources ● Consider social, economic and ethical issues raised by the use of ICT ● Consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated, and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use ● Use initiative to exploit the potential of more advanced features of ICT tools and skills, e.g. coding ● Explore independently beyond the given breadth of an ICT topic ● Develop systems that meet personal needs and interests ● Grasp and premeditate structures, for example structures in data and directories ● Intrigued, rather than frustrated, by problems; show tenacity and creativity when solving them ● Inclination and ability to help others, e.g. explaining the logic of required steps
Design & Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● High levels of technological understanding and application ● High-quality making and precise practical skills ● Readily accept and discuss new ideas; conceptualise beyond the information given ● Have flashes of inspiration and highly original or innovative ideas ● Demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues ● Identify the simple, elegant solution from complex, disorganised data ● Reflective and constructively self-critical ● Link the familiar with the novel ● See application in 2D or 3D ● Transfer and adapt ideas from the familiar to a new problem ● Sensitive to aesthetic, social and cultural issues when designing and evaluating ● Capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products ● Conduct independent research to solve problems ● Work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience and empathise with users' needs and wants
Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respond to drama tasks easily ● Suggest original, imaginative and creative approaches/ideas to tasks set ● Look for different and unusual ways of working ● Have a range of drama information - often intuitively - which they bring to the work ● Be verbally fluent and perceptive with the work being created ● Shows good leadership qualities and directorial vision, often taking the role of a director within group work ● Identify impact on the audience ● Find solutions to drama based problems ● Adaptable and versatile ● Empathise and understand how characters develop instinctively ● Usually (but not always) extroverts and happy to perform their work ● Highly motivated and expressive

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate ideas clearly and are happy to share these with others • Show very good communication skills and ability to work in groups • Able to command presence on the stage as an individual performer • Good physical and vocal skills • Show awareness of the dramatic potential - serious/comic/another genre
Early Years	<p>Highly able learners usually demonstrate characteristics and abilities across one or more of the seven areas of learning (prime and specific) in the EYFS Framework, such as:</p> <p><u>Literacy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognises a wide range of letters and sounds well before peers • Begins reading independently or shows deep interest in books beyond age expectations • Writes with a strong sense of story, structure, and early punctuation • Makes links between sounds and letters with little adult prompting <p><u>Understanding the World</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows advanced knowledge of science, history, geography, or technology (e.g. knowing about planets, life cycles) • Demonstrates curiosity and independently investigates how things work • Makes connections across experiences/learning and explains them with logical reasoning
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read widely, fluently and independently • Read with meaning, drawing on inference and deduction; can “read between the lines” • Sensitive to the nuance of language • Use language precisely, with technical accuracy • Delight in the meaning of words • Use extended vocabulary • Show pleasure and involvement in experimenting/playing with language and manipulating language to effect • Awareness of the special features of language, such as rhyme • Write or talk in imaginative, lucid and cogent ways, showing flair and creativity • Can express ideas succinctly and elegantly • Grasp the essence of particular styles and adapt them to their own purposes • Can display a sophisticated sense and appreciation of humour; this humour can be “quirky”; understand irony etc • Contribute with incisive, critical responses • Can analyse own work • Can produce written work that is substantial and the product of sustained, well-directed effort • Elaborate on content that is exceptional for their age • Can engage seriously and creatively with moral and social themes expressed in literature • Can justify opinions convincingly and challenge others’ points of view • Strong communicative skills • Articulate and confident speakers • Very good listening skills • Show enthusiasm and enjoyment in the subject; can be sensitive
French	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early awareness of the second language as a separate system • Curiosity about how language works • Ability to extrapolate general rules from samples • Ability to pick up new language and structures quickly • Ability to make connections and classify words and structures, e.g. to help

	<p>them learn more efficiently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to identify, memorise and reproduce new sounds • Strong desire to put language together by themselves • Desire to ask further questions and seek solutions • Awareness and use of a range of strategies for learning • Intense interest in the cultural features of the language studied • Ability to transfer skills across and to other languages
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand concepts clearly; can apply this understanding to new situations to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions • Understand geographical ideas and theories; apply them to real situations • Communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word, in ways that are appropriate to task and audience • Learn subject-specific vocabulary and use it accurately • Reason, argue and think logically • Able to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences • Use and apply mathematical principles and formulae to solve geographical tasks and problems • Identify their own geographical questions and sequence investigations • Understand, and able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships • Enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information • Competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required • Well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and life in different places • Wide-ranging general knowledge about the world and topical issues • Able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another • Creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solutions
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform at levels of literacy that are advanced for their age • Able to communicate effectively in different forms • Use subject-specific vocabulary with accuracy and confidence • Show particular skill at inference and deduction • Able to make logical connections between events and people • Good understanding of cause and effect • Able to set both new and previously acquired information in a chronological framework • Broad range of general and historical knowledge • Can discuss the significance of events, people and changes • Maturity in ability to analyse historical sources and organise historical information • Able to demonstrate and use a wide and growing knowledge base • Able to use several sources simultaneously with confidence and perception, including complex and ambiguous ones • Keen awareness of the characteristics of different historical periods • Able to question, challenge and develop own lines of enquiry • Good grasp and understanding of historical interpretation • Can make imaginative links between the topics studied in multiple subject fields • Ability to hypothesise; can make judgements and justify them • Can take on broad concepts • Offer unexpected insights • Willingness to search for new information and ideas • Enquiring mind

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can cope with tentative conclusions • Developed sense of empathy and imagination • Use visits to historical sites as a basis for further investigation
Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid and sound memorisation of mathematical material • Learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly • Reason logically: can verify, justify and prove • Work systematically and accurately • More analytical • Recognise patterns easily and see the formal structure of a problem in a way that leads to ideas for action • Use mathematical symbols accurately and confidently as part of the thinking process • Make jumps in reasoning • Think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches • Demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm for mathematical problems • Make connections between the concepts they have learned • Can take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems • Reverse their direction of thought – may work backwards and forwards when solving a problem • Communicate their reasoning and justify their methods • Sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions • Enjoy working at increased depth • Adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry • Take delight in numbers and use them in other areas of the curriculum, e.g. story-telling • Enjoy mathematical puzzles and problems
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captivated by sound and engage fully with music • Select an instrument with care; may be unwilling to relinquish the instrument • Find it difficult not to respond physically to music • Memorise music quickly, without any apparent effort • Able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after only one hearing) • Sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase and pitch; the music makes sense • Particularly sensitive to melody, timbre, rhythms and patterns; create and follow rhythmic patterns • 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 • Have the motivation and dedication to persevere and practise; show a commitment to achieving excellence
PE & Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the body with confidence in differentiated, expressive and imaginative ways • Good sense of shape, space direction and timing • Movement is fluent and can be elegant • High degree of control of their body; good control of gross and fine body movements and can handle objects skilfully • High degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance • Use technical terms effectively, accurately and fluently • Able to analyse and evaluate their own and others' work, using results for self-improvement • High level of understanding of principles of health-related exercise and their application in a variety of activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Particularly high levels of fitness for their age ● Specific strengths in particular areas, e.g. games or dance ● Able to perform advanced skills and techniques and transfer skills between activities ● Good decision makers; able to take the initiative; demonstrate autonomy, leadership and independence of thought ● Able to reflect on processes and outcomes to improve performance ● Take risks with ideas and approaches ● Show perseverance and commitment ● Involvement with a range of related extracurricular activities ● Understand the need for effective coaching
RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use subject specific vocabulary with accuracy and confidence ● Show particular skill at knowing what counts as good evidence in understanding multiple religions or ethical thought ● Able to make logical connections between events and people ● Broad range of historical and religious knowledge ● Maturity in ability to analyse and draw meaning from artifacts, art and symbolism ● Able to use several sources simultaneously with confidence and perception, including complex and ambiguous ones ● Able to question, challenge and develop their own lines of thought ● Can make imaginative links and meaning between the topic studied and various religious texts ● Ability to hypothesise; make judgements and justify them ● Willingness to search for new information ideas and thoughts ● Enquiring mind ● Can appreciate other viewpoints and conclusions ● Developed sense of empathy, imagination and thought ● Use visits to historical or religious sites as a basis for further independent investigation ● Maturity in seeing the world through the eyes of others ● Show particular skill and confidence in debating ● Maturity when reflecting of feelings, attitudes beliefs and values
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aware of how the context influences the interpretation of science content ● Recognise patterns and relationships in science data ● Can hypothesise/predict based on valid evidence and draw conclusions ● Decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables ● Enjoy researching obscure facts and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena ● Recognise and process reliable, valid and accurate data; can explain why data is unreliable, invalid or inaccurate ● Inquisitive about how things work and why things happen ● Good observational skills ● Enjoy talking with the teacher about new information or ideas ● Think flexibly, generalise ideas and adapt problem-solving approaches ● Ask many questions ● Enjoy logical reasoning ● May be able to miss out steps when reasoning ● Strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts ● Use advanced and extensive vocabulary, including the use of appropriate language from other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics ● Put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions ● Extremely interested in finding out more about things around them ● Read widely on science or science fiction ● Have scientific hobbies and/or members of scientific clubs and societies ● Able to sustain their interest and concentration and go beyond an obvious

	<p>answer with greater depth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to evaluate findings and think critically; can be self-critical• Easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas; may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly
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