



# ABLE, INTERESTED, AND MOTIVATED

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## 1. Policy Statement

**At Wood Green School, we want all of our students to fulfil their potential, including the most able.**

It is our ambition to:

1. challenge our most able students effectively and develop a culture of high expectations for students and teachers of all key stages;
2. champion the distinct needs of our most able students;
3. ensure that our most able students leave school with the right level of qualification, along with the skills and confidence they need to succeed.

## 2. Definition

We identify students as Able, Interested, and Motivated (AIM) if they are:

1. working at a level significantly ahead of their year group ('able');
2. curious, engaged, wanting to know more ('interested');
3. ambitious, eager, determined to be successful ('motivated').

The ways in which we identify AIM students are detailed under Identification in Section 2 below.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Coordinator, working with the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for the curriculum, is responsible for:
  - i. keeping a record of students who have been identified as AIM;
  - ii. using this record to monitor the progress of AIM students;
  - iii. providing advice and guidance to AIM students about the opportunities open to them;
  - iv. developing opportunities beyond the classroom by establishing links with outside providers;
  - v. monitoring student participation in AIM activities;
  - vi. communicating with parents/carers;
  - vii. liaising with primary schools to ensure information held is transferred effectively;
  - viii. championing the distinct needs of those who are AIM.
2. Departments are responsible for:
  - i. identifying AIM students on an ongoing basis ;
  - ii. differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of AIM students;
  - iii. consistently providing students with work that is appropriately challenging;
  - iv. monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in every key stage.
3. Heads of Learning Community are responsible for:
  - i. celebration assemblies rewarding effort, aspiration, and achievement;
  - ii. transition arrangements with primary schools (Lower School only);
  - iii. monitoring options in Years 9 and 11 as well as university choices in the Sixth Form.

## 4. Identification

1. Identification on transition from primary school

Many AIM students will have been identified much earlier than Key Stage 3. It is important to use information held by feeder schools effectively so that we can provide our AIM students with the right level of challenge from the start. If AIM students are not identified on admission, they can end up treading water, repeating work they have already mastered until they are set adequate tasks. We want to get them off to a flying start and give them the encouragement and resources to achieve great things.

## 2. Identification during a student's time at the school

There is no single, perfect way of identifying AIM students, and we can easily miss students if identification is based solely on numerical data. AIM students show their potential, talents, and abilities in ways that are not always easy to identify with ability tests. Some students can go under the radar: for example, students who are divergent thinkers, or have vivid imaginations, or whose biggest asset is their innate creativity.

Because of this, we draw on a range of different kinds of evidence, not just numbers. Individual departments have their own identification criteria, included in the Appendix and in the *Able, Interested, and Motivated Support Booklet*. Teaching staff nominate AIM students throughout the year and parents and carers are informed when their child has been identified, along with the student themselves.

## 5. Provision

AIM students should not be seen as 'the end product'. Getting identified as AIM is certainly a good start, but we also want to nurture our most able students so that they will flourish, succeed, and achieve.

**Our AIM provision is inclusive. We are uncomfortable with the idea that AIM students become an elite group that receive certain privileges, and we want as many students as possible to be able to access enrichment provision.**

All AIM provision begins with high-quality teaching first. We know that AIM students thrive on higher cognitive learning and need far less time to grasp key concepts before they are ready to put their skills into practice. This is a regular part of in-service training for staff (INSET). We also offer a range of activities at lunchtime and after school to provide an additional challenge. These activities are listed on the school website.

We are planning to expand what we offer our most able. In the future, we would like to provide programmes that are even more tailored and intensive, particularly where underachieving students are concerned (see Supporting students who are underachieving, below). Such programmes might include expert-led masterclasses, local arts provision, summer schools, or specialist advanced courses like the Open University's Young Applicants in Schools Scheme (YASS).

### 1. Monitoring underachievement

We keep an AIM register to help us monitor student progress. Parents will be informed by letter if their child has been identified. When we review our data, we pay particular attention to groups of vulnerable AIM students, including:

- i. disadvantaged pupils who attract Pupil Premium funding
- ii. black and minority ethnic (BME) groups
- iii. those with English as an additional language (EAL), including bilingual students
- iv. those with special educational needs
- v. those with medical conditions or disabilities
- vi. poor attenders
- vii. young carers
- viii. looked-after students

Teacher assessments can identify students who are not making expected progress but we also look out for underachievement in other ways. For example, AIM students can sometimes become perfectionistic or overly self-critical, which can result in them purposefully avoiding new activities for fear of failure. Other students might start to withdraw socially and in lessons, or show other signs of low self-esteem.

### 2. Supporting students who are underachieving

As with all students, where AIM students are not doing as well as they should be, we would like to offer whatever resources we can to help put them back on track.

Our support would start with specific programmes for small groups of students. These could cover a range of topics: study skills, social skills, creative thinking, personal targets, and so on. If individual students are still underachieving at the next review point, we might look to provide something more tailored and intensive, like specific mentoring or one-to-one tuition. In Sixth Form, for

example, we run supervised study sessions every week as part of our work with the PiXL (Partners in Excellence) Club. At every stage, we like to work with students and parents to discuss possible programmes and targets.

## **6. Final Thoughts**

'Able, Interested, and Motivated' is a whole-school culture, not a category: a culture of learning, achieving, and excelling. It means more than just scoring highly on a test; it is about being exceptional in some way. It is about showing a real flair for something, a flash of brilliance, perhaps. But even the most brilliant of students will still need nurturing, whether it is through greater challenges, fresh opportunities, or just extra encouragement. We want all our students to have high aspirations, to be the very best they can be, to develop existing talents and discover new ones.

Wood Green School wants to give every student the chance to flourish. We are proud of our students, and working with them is an absolute privilege.