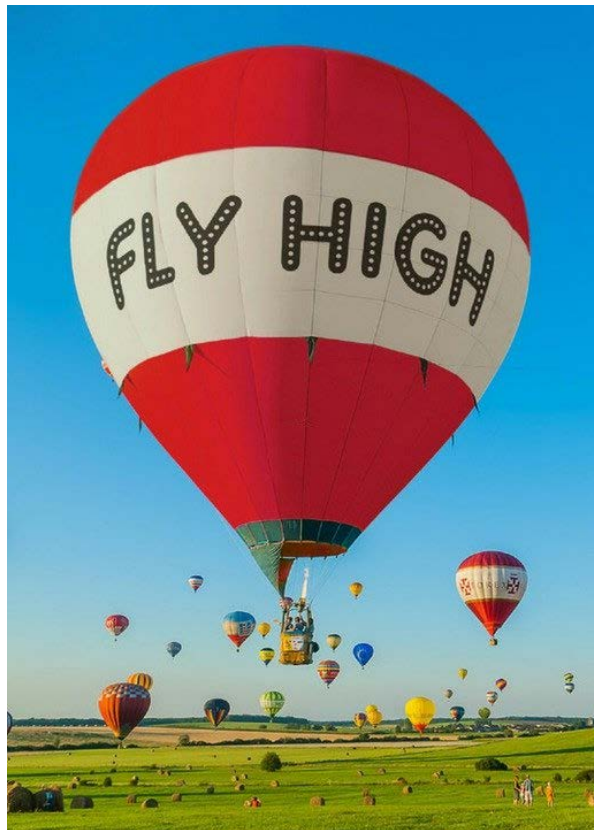


## Furze Platt Senior School

# High Learning Potential Information for parents and carers



## Why 'High Learning Potential'?

There are lots of terms used, e.g. highly able, more/most able, gifted and talented. We prefer High Learning Potential (HLP) or High Potential Learners (HPL) as the focus is on potential as something to grow through continued effort, perseverance and learning from others, from mistakes and through multiple strategies (it's not just a fixed ability).



## Help your high potential child at home

- Encourage your child to respect everybody, whatever their ability; everybody has something valuable to offer and being able to work with a wide variety of people will always be important.
- Assure your child that you love them, regardless of their achievements.
- Encourage a positive approach to learning and success without expecting perfection.
- Encourage them to take responsibility for their learning, setting their own challenges and goals, rather than depending on teachers or parents.
- Model how to deal with challenges and how to learn from mistakes as high potential learners can become very worried about getting everything right.
- Praise the learning process, not the outcome. Notice when they persevere, try a variety of approaches, experiment and learn from mistakes as this will help when they encounter challenges.
- Encourage your child to research, predict, explore, question, problem solve, evaluate and ask questions but don't take over.

- Welcome unusual ideas and suggestions as opportunities to discuss and explore.
- Ensure a balance of learning and leisure; nobody can or should work all the time.
- Use books, newspapers, internet and TV critically, as a starting point for discussion.
- Help your child to prioritise and pick out the most important points. High potential learners can struggle to prioritise as they know so much about a topic. Helping them to pick out what really matters will be so important when it comes to timed tests and exams.

## Opportunities outside of the home

1. Use art galleries, museums, historical places, travel and trips as learning experiences. Lots of virtual events are available as well.
2. Take advantage of educational activities outside of school time e.g. Summer University, Duke of Edinburgh, clubs. As Associate Members of Potential Plus UK, you have access to their events aimed specifically at high potential learners and their families.
3. Use the school and local libraries for access to computers, journals and research as well as for borrowing books. Virtual libraries are also a great source of books, podcasts, etc.
4. Encourage your child to take up a sport, hobby or musical instrument – anything that requires practice over a long period of time, so they link perseverance and hard work to their success.



## Being different can feel difficult

- It can be difficult to learn at a faster rate than others in the class - recognise that your child may need emotional support.
- High potential learners often put too much pressure on themselves or aim for perfection. Help them to understand that nobody can be perfect all the time.
- Some exceptionally high potential learners can be overly sensitive, so friendships can cause anxiety.
- Be aware that your child may be very successful in one area yet need support in another, e.g. they may be exceptionally good at Maths, but need to develop social skills or need help with literary-based subjects.



- Sometimes students with high learning potential find it hard to accept advice as they tend to see it as personal criticism. Encourage them to use advice – as it is intended – to improve their skills. Talk about feedback you have had, how you felt and how it helped you.
- Some high potential learners are more sensitive to upsetting experiences and feel things more strongly. Recognise that their emotional needs may be greater than others, finding time to listen even if the problem appears trivial to you.

## Challenge in the classroom

Teachers provide extra challenge in a variety of ways, which may not be obvious to you or to learners.

### Personalising the task

This means that activities are presented at a number of different levels of challenge ranging

from relatively simple to very complex, often encouraging the application of learning to create something completely new.

### Grouping learners based on current performance

High potential learners can be put together so that they can really stretch each other. Roles can be allocated within these groups i.e. group leader/director etc. As well as providing opportunities for High potential learners to work together, schools use a range of groupings to ensure that all students learn to collaborate successfully with others of all abilities in

preparation for life beyond school.

We value all contributions and contributors and help our High potential learners

to understand that everyone has something to offer and deserves respect.



### Discovery

Learning can include using inductive reasoning to discover patterns, ideas and underlying principles.

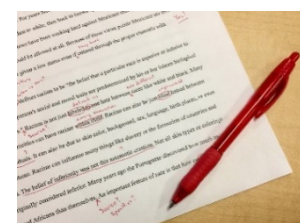
### Questioning

The way in which teachers question learners is one of the most valuable ways of deepening thinking and really challenging them. Higher order thinking is encouraged so learners analyse, apply, develop, evaluate and re-apply. Teachers will target their questioning to meet learners' needs.

### Success criteria

Success criteria that go beyond the learners' current Key Stage are often used, for example, when teaching a GCSE class, A-Level and sometimes degree level criteria are included.

### Feedback



Teachers will give learners feedback based on their current performance and what they need to do to get to the next



stage. This may be verbal or written (the most effective feedback is immediate, in-class feedback).

### **'Top down' teaching**

When planning lessons, teachers are encouraged to plan for the top and then support those who need it. This is more successful for all learners than teaching to the middle and fanning out, which often fails to stretch high potential learners. In addition, lessons include Challenge Tasks to provide high levels of challenge and excitement.

### **Creating 'space above'**

High potential learners should have somewhere to progress to in lessons – something they still can't do, haven't thought about or tried yet. This also helps to develop a "growth mindset", the belief that intelligence can be improved by practice and challenge.

### **Open-endedness**

Open ended activities, with no predetermined right answer, stimulate higher order thinking, creativity, independence and investigation.



### **Choice**

Learners can be given the freedom to choose, when appropriate, what to investigate and how to study to increase their interest in learning and develop independence in their learning.

### **Pace**

Rapid pacing, when appropriate, helps maintain interest and can support different learning styles. At the same time, High potential learners benefit from opportunities to spend longer periods of time delving more deeply into a topic. It is often a myth that the students with high learning potential finish first; many take extraordinary amounts of time over their learning, striving to get it just right!

**Study of People** High potential Learners should study creative, innovative and productive people to enhance their own potential by learning how to make the most of their talents and successes. Understanding

that success in life requires resilience, commitment and a lot of effort is very important for this group.

### **Variety**

Variety means enrichment, depth or ideas and content areas not taught in the regular curriculum. Journals, books, documentaries and talks, e.g. TED talks can all be really helpful.



### **For older children**

There are a number of excellent talks available, most are free and available online if you can't get there in person. They are usually aimed at undergraduates so perfect for pursuing interests in specialist topics or building a personal statement for university applications. Try:

Gresham College

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/watch/>

University College London

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/events/lunch-hour-lectures>

### **Useful resources and sources of help**

Your school's membership gives you automatic Associate Family membership of Potential Plus UK, a charity that works with high learning potential young people, their families and schools to support their academic achievement and well-being.

They have a wealth of advice sheets, activity packs, workshops and events for parents, plus many opportunities for young people to explore their interests with like-minded peers. Membership includes the monthly e-newsletter Focus on Potential. Details can be found on their website so look out for online festivals, activities and family events. We encourage to join up as Associate Family members so that you can get full access to their online resources. Details are provided on the next page.



<https://potentialplusuk.org/>

High Learning Potential Lead  
at **Furze Platt Senior School, Miss  
Inwood.**

Please contact [katie.inwood@furzeplatt.net](mailto:katie.inwood@furzeplatt.net)

You will also find information on the school  
website: <https://www.furzeplatt.com/>

## Associate Family membership of

### Potential Plus UK through your school

Your school is a member of Potential Plus UK, an independent charity that has been working with families and schools for the benefit of young people with high learning potential since we were established in 1967.

Your school's membership provides Associate Family membership for the families of its students with high learning potential. However, your child does not have to gain any specific educational achievements or grades for you to access our support.

Benefits of Associate Family membership:

- Members' online community including specialist groups, forum and e-resources
- Focus on Potential monthly mailings with information and support
- Member-only events and member discounts for events (as appropriate)

### How to create your account

Type into your browser:

- [Community.potentialplusuk.org](https://community.potentialplusuk.org)

And click on the bottom left box:

- Become a Member Today

Scroll down to the purple box:

- Click here to join as an Associate Family member by School

Register your Username and Name

Check your membership selection, accept and continue

Complete your Member Information

- Only your **Nick/screen**

**name** and **Region** are visible to other members in any groups you join. For best practice we recommend that you select Private for other fields that are not automatically locked as Private

To continue you must put a valid Access Code in the field:

- School or Organisation Access Code

Your school's Access Code for the current year is:

**67333047ZKK25822**