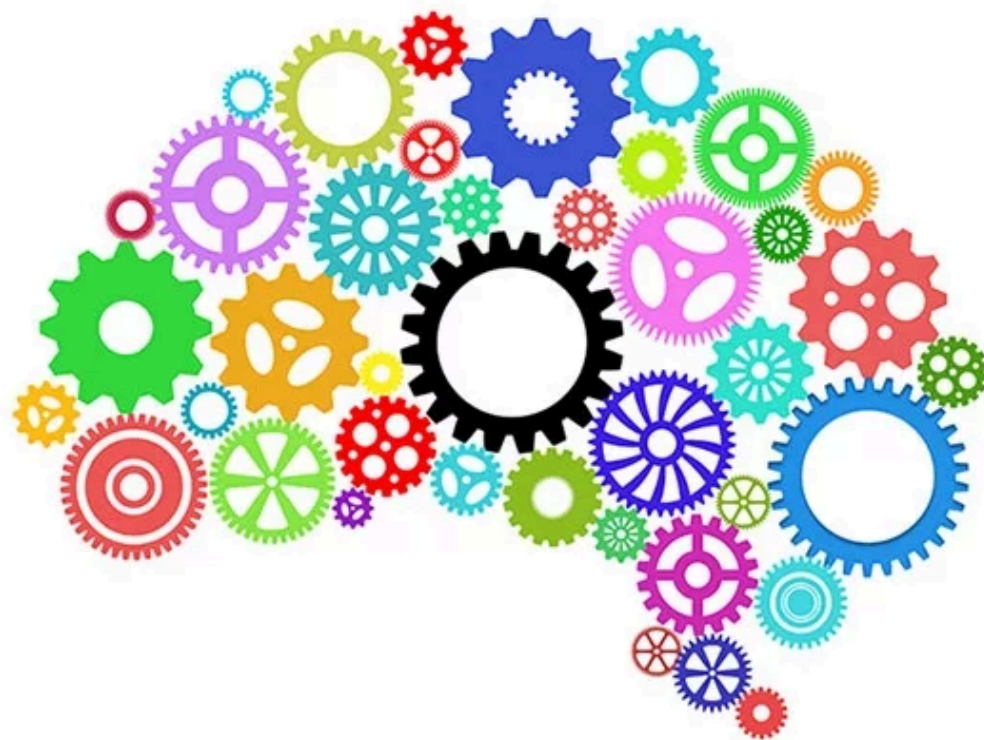


Victory Scholars

Parent Booklet for HPA (**Victory Scholars**)





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Introduction

Many parents and children will be unfamiliar with the ever-changing terminology, specific expectations, and opportunities that surround the world of education. The aim of this booklet is to clarify what we mean by HPA, and the responsibilities Victory Academy have in giving your child or children the highest quality of enrichment, support, teaching and opportunities to progress and succeed in whatever they choose in life. Also in this booklet, we hope to suggest ways in which you can support your children at home, what we expect from an HPA student, and illustrate what we provide for this group.

Ultimately, we hope that by the end of their time at Victory Academy your child will be well-placed to achieve not only high grades in their GCSEs and A-Levels across all subjects, but also have had meaningful and high-level support to challenge, stimulate and engage their bright young minds.

Please note: the term HPA is the official name for highly able students; however, this has been replaced at OVA as Victory Scholars. References to HPA are the same as Victory Scholars and vice versa.

What is an HPA?

HPA defined

Previously known as AG&T, which stood for *Able, Gifted and Talented*. This terminology has now been replaced with HPA, which stands for *High Prior Attainers*.

The Ormiston Trust defines an HPA student as a child that has achieved an average SATs score of *110. This is based on Reading and Maths at primary school. For example, a student may have scored 112 in Reading and 108 in Maths, and this would be a combined score (known as a Scaled Score Average) of 110. This would qualify as HPA

This means that we have HPA students that range from 110 to 120. 120 is the top SAT score. Those with a Scaled Score Average of 115 and over are in the category of HPA+.

Year 7

When Year 7s pupils join the academy, we base their attainment status on their Key Stage 2 data from their SAT scores, as detailed above. However, for the academic years 2019/20 and 2020/21, due the pandemic, the way in which the academy has assessed them has been monitored within the school. These are called Center Assessed Tests (CATs). However, now that we have returned to pre-pandemic assessments, SATS are now once again the method in which HPAs are assessed. The percentage of HPA students in any given cohort is approximately 8%.

Additional note: The Scaled Score Average of 110 has not yet been confirmed by the Department for Education (DfE) as an officially recognised HPA benchmark. The DfE has suggested that schools and trusts select their own criteria to define HPA.

HPA in the Classroom

We have a policy of challenging all students at Victory Academy whatever their abilities. We share all the relevant data with teaching staff and they use this to create the appropriate levels of challenge for the HPA in their classes. Each teacher knows that embedding high-level tasks for HPA is fundamental to stretching the minds of our students. Teachers employ a range of strategies and resources so HPA students can access subjects to meet their abilities. A 'top down' approach is recognised as the most effective way to stretch a whole class. 'Top down' means that lessons are taught at the highest level so that no child is ever left without a challenge. Questioning is also a key method to aid deeper understanding, and follow-up questioning is used to push HPA's analytical skills even further. Also, every appropriate opportunity is taken to allow HPA students to think beyond the lesson's brief to allow creative and independent thinking on the subject.

We regularly offer CPD (Continual Professional Development) for teaching staff to update and provide them with the latest training on how to continue to deliver high standards for our HPA students.

HPA and the Family

Advancing and supporting a HPA student stretches beyond the limitations of the classroom. To help your HPA child we have suggested a range of activities that you could try with them in order to develop their skills and stimulate their minds beyond the school environment. Remember, try to keep it enjoyable, and in no way should it become onerous, tiring or intimidating.

The following list are suggestions:

- Read with them, even if they are good readers and discuss the texts.
- HPA children are usually great at learning new words – have a new word of the week at home. Use of adult language.
- Extend their general knowledge with a fact of the week.
- Encourage physical activity to maintain general fitness.
- Do not always focus on your child's obvious skills – encourage them to sample new activities.
- Puzzles, crosswords, logic games, word games, card games, board games all help to develop thinking skills and social interaction.

- Learning a new language together.
- If possible, give children a broad range of experiences.
- Encourage children to ask questions and answer them as fully and honestly as possible but admit it when you do not have a full answer.
- Provide the space and 'free time' in which to play, experiment and develop hobbies and interests of his/her own.
- Give lots of praise and encouragement.
- It is important to be aware of the needs and talents of the other children in the family.
- Try not to replicate what goes on in school unless discussed with their teachers.

HPA expectations

As our objective is to provide the best enrichment, guidance and teaching possible, it is important that HPA students attempt to engage with as many of the provisions we offer. Many students have wide-ranging and busy schedules, and we hope that they also engage with the enrichment we offer. In the classroom, it is vital that they take advantage of all the challenges that teachers build into their lessons, along with all the additional and home-based learning. With this, they will find that their progress will match their efforts with a committed approach to their HPA abilities. And as students in 'Top Set' groups, we hope that our Victory Scholars take every opportunity to engage and capitalise on high quality teaching and learning that we provide at Victory.

HPAs and some of what we offer

To make sure that HPA students are catered for across the academy, we offer a range of opportunities, and below is a sample of the activities and challenges that we have provided in the past. We constantly review what we provide, so we will often add, adapt or replace some of the activities to suit what is right for the HPA students, which means this list is correct at the time of publication but may slightly change over time.

- *Young Norfolk Writers Competition*
- *Undercover Writers* in partnership with the University of East Anglia

- *The Victory Bugle* newspaper
 - Continued partnership projects with *The Norwich School*.
 - *The Victory Annual Spelling Bee*
 - *The Elite Reviewers Book Club*
 - *HPA Projects* including English, Art History, History, medicine and engineering.
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- *Victory Key Stage 3 Challenge Booklets* in Maths, Science, History, English and Art.
 - Visiting authors who provide workshops. Writers include Alexander Gordon-Smith, Mark Grist, Kevin Crossley-Holland and Lewis Buxton.
 - Modern Foreign Languages film night.
 - *Science Experiment Club*.
 - *Top of the Bench Competition* in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry
 - *Salter's Challenge* for Year 8s in partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry.
 - Science Experiment Club
 - The *Bringing Science to You* challenge in partnership with the University of East Anglia
 - *STEM Challenge Day* in partnership with MCS Projects
 - *Chess Club*
 - *GEMs Maths Club (Girls in Engineering Mathematics)*
 - *UKMT Club (United Kingdom Mathematics Trust)*
 - *Explore Maths* in partnership with the University of East Anglia
 - *Art Masterclass* in partnership with NAU
 - *Art Club*
 - *Castle Museum Visits* for Textiles and Photography (including A-Level)
 - *Bletchley Park - History* with curriculum links to geography and maths.
 - *Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge University Outreach* programmes.

Contact

I hope this booklet has been helpful and that you are better informed on the details on HPA students, what we offer and how you can support them. However, if you have any enquiries or comments, please contact me on the following email address.

I look forward to working with your HPA child.

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