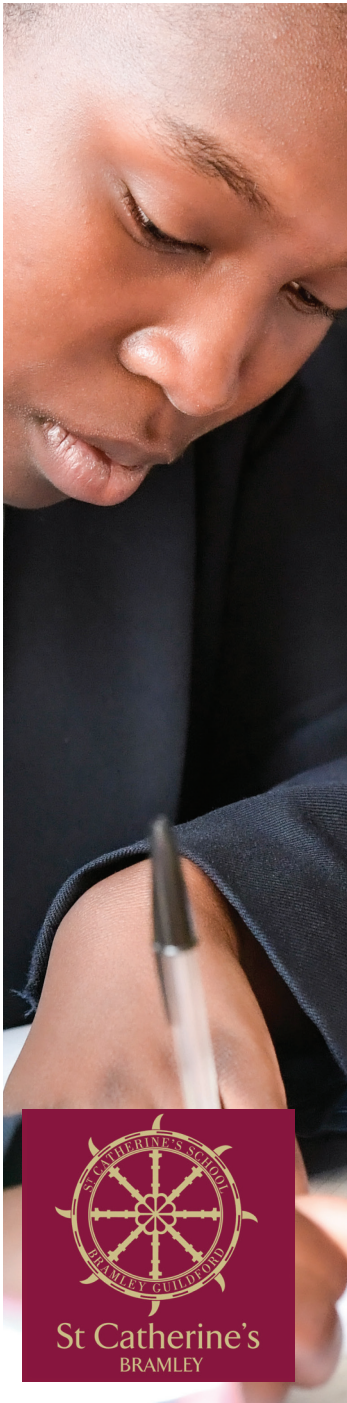


STRETCH AND CHALLENGE



Stretch and challenge is a philosophy that embodies an ethos of ambition aiming to encourage students beyond their comfort zones and inspire them to reach new heights in their learning journey. At the heart of this lies the belief that every student, regardless of their current ability can benefit from being stretched intellectually. In the words of Dr Carol Dweck, a renowned psychologist and researcher, *"In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, oh, I'm going to reveal my weaknesses, you say, wow, here's a chance to grow."*



Studies have found that students who were consistently challenged in their learning environment showed a 12% increase in overall academic performance¹. By providing appropriate stretch and challenge, we are not just catering to higher-attaining pupils. We are fostering a growth mindset, promoting resilience, and equipping all learners with the skills they need to face challenges beyond the classroom.

¹ Hancock, P.A., R.A. (2016). A new law for time perception. The American Journal of Psychology, 129(2), 111-124

Our approach is to:

- Encourage bold aspirations:** Communicate clear goals and standards to students, encourage them to strive for excellence in their work.
- Differentiate instruction:** Tailor teaching methods and materials to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities, ensuring all students are properly challenged.
- Encourage critical thinking:** Design activities and assignments that require students to analyse, evaluate, and synthesise information rather than simply memorizing facts.
- Promote inquiry-based learning:** Encourage curiosity and exploration by framing lessons around questions and problems that require investigation and problem-solving.
- Offer opportunities for choice:** Provide students with options for demonstrating their understanding and mastery of concepts, allowing them to pursue areas of interest within the curriculum.
- Provide constructive feedback:** Offer specific, actionable feedback that guides students towards improvement and encourages them to take risks in their learning.
- Foster collaboration:** Facilitate group work and discussion that challenge students to consider diverse perspectives and defend their ideas with evidence.
- Integrate real-world applications:** Connect classroom learning to real-life scenarios and current events, helping students see the relevance and importance of what they are studying.
- Promote independent learning:** Encourage students to take ownership of their learning by providing opportunities for self-directed research and projects.
- Use formative assessments:** Regularly assess student progress through quizzes, discussions, and other informal methods to gauge understanding and adjust instruction as needed.