

# Gifted and Talented Policy (AG14)

## Introduction

Gifted and Talented children may stand out among their peers for positive, but also negative reasons. Generally, they may be quick, efficient learners with a high capacity to assimilate new knowledge and have exceptional powers of analysis and interpretation. On the other hand, they may be perfectionists, easily frustrated with wild variations between oral and written ability or between achievements in different academic areas. Some Gifted and Talented children are delightful socially, others are more withdrawn or isolated.

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum appropriate to the needs and abilities of all children. Teaching and learning is planned and adapted to enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. It is policy to ensure that the needs of those children who have been identified as 'gifted' and 'talented' according to national guidelines are supported.

## Definition

A pupil is recognised as **gifted** or **talented** if they:

- are highly successful across a wide range of subjects;
- fall into the top 2% of the nation in standardised tests;
- have outstanding ability in only one area of the curriculum.

The following areas should be considered in addition to academic excellence:

- Physical Talent
- Visual / Performing Talent
- Mechanical Ingenuity
- Outstanding leadership
- Social Awareness
- Creativity

## Aims

The school aims to:

- Identify pupils with learning difficulties at both ends of the spectrum and ensure that their needs are met;
- Enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- Ensure that all learners make the best possible progress;
- Ensure that all parents are informed of their child's needs and provision and that there is effective communication between parents and the school;
- Promote an effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate;
- Enable children to develop to their full potential;
- Offer children opportunities to generate their own learning;
- Ensure that we challenge and extend children through the work that we set them;
- Encourage children to think and work independently.

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All work is matched to the needs of the individual, taking into account both teaching and learning styles. Results from all internal and external assessments, including Cognitive Ability tests are used to monitor the progress being made by all children and to guide future teaching.

Irrespective of differences in ability, all pupils must be able to access all areas of learning, and develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development into active and responsible adults.

### **Identification of more able and very able children**

A range of strategies will be used to identify more able and very able pupils. The identification process is ongoing and begins as soon as the child joins the school. Records from previous schools are stored and information obtained from parents may also be added to these records.

As children progress through the school children are tested regularly in different subject areas to ensure that they are making appropriate progress. They are identified as more able or very able when they achieve high levels of attainment across the curriculum, or in particular skills or aspects of subjects.

Each teacher regularly reviews the children's progress either as a subject teacher or as a tutor. Teachers discuss the children's progress with parents at parents' evenings, and report formally through the school reporting system.

Children are monitored closely in departments and through Heads of Department meetings and staff meetings when individuals are often raised for discussion.

In English, more able or very able pupils can be identified when they:

- demonstrate high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
- use research skills effectively to synthesise information;
- enjoy reading and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level;
- use a wide vocabulary and enjoy working with words;
- see issues from a range of perspectives;
- Possess a creative and productive mind and use advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

In Mathematics, more able and very able pupils are identified when they:

- explore a range of strategies for solving a problem;
- are naturally curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
- see solutions quickly without needing to try a range of options;
- look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
- work flexibly and establish their own strategies;
- enjoy manipulating numbers in a variety of ways.

Gifted and Talented children tend to have a combination of some of the following qualities:

- they are interested in a broad range of things;
- they are flexible intellectually;

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- they are highly imaginative;
- they possess an off beat sense of humour;
- they take an unconventional approach and can think laterally;
- they can be beyond their peer group socially and intellectually ;
- they can possess a single-mindedness or lopsidedness, sometimes to the point of causing worry in the classroom (so we may find gifted and talented children in lower sets);
- they show an excitement about ideas and abstract concepts;
- they often do not fear failure (this shows they understand the educational value of making mistakes).

### Teaching and learning styles

Teachers plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all children giving them the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and this achieved by providing:

- a common activity that allows the children to respond at their own level;
- enrichment activities that broaden a child’s learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
- individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- opportunities for pupils to progress through their work at their own rate of learning;
- Adaptation of task within the classroom, very able, older pupils children may often be taught to GCSE standard and beyond in a limited number of aspects;
- the setting of open ended tasks in the classroom;
- the teaching of study skills and thinking skills;
- the opportunity to represent the school in a variety of sports at county, national and sometimes, national, level;
- entry to competitions in a variety of subject areas;
- publication of children’s work in the school newsletters, Lookout magazine and on the school website;
- Music affords several outlets, with the School choir participating in many public events, and a programme of regular informal concerts at which children of all levels of ability can perform. Individual tuition enables Gifted and Talented children to aim high;
- Prefect and monitor systems and house system allowing children to excel socially and display leadership strengths;
- pupil responsibility during open mornings;
- public speaking activities and competitions;
- one-to-one Learning Support lessons. Given the often unorthodox nature of their talents, it is not paradoxical that some Gifted and Talented children may require extra help.

A range of extra curricular activities are provided for children. These offer more able and very able children the opportunity to further extend their learning in range of activities. Opportunities may include academic, sporting, musical, drama and creative art clubs.

Learning is also enriched through regular prep (homework) activities linked to the work being undertaken in classes. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.

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The children also have opportunities to experience a wide range of educational visits and experiences that further enrich and add depth to learning.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator co-ordinates the provision and practice within the school for more able and very able children. They should work closely with the Deputy Head (Academic) and Head of Pre-Prep. This role includes:

- liaising with colleagues (including pre-prep) and parents when appropriate.
- monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken by more able and very able pupils across all curriculum areas;
- regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for more able and very able children;
- supporting staff in the identification of and provision for Gifted and Talented children;
- providing advice and support for staff in the development of teaching and learning strategies for more able and very able children;

Teaching staff have a responsibility to help identify Gifted and Talented children in their classes and to ensure that they are being adequately challenged by extension tasks or opportunities for performance.

Pastoral staff have an essential role in the support and care of Gifted and Talented children, helping them to cope socially and academically.

Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that Gifted and Talented children are given opportunities for extension and enrichment in their own subject areas, inside and outside of the classroom.

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