

[Revised and Adopted Spring 2017]

Educating Gifted and Talented Children Policy

This Policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the effective provision of education for children recognised as being Gifted or Talented.

Policy Rationale and Aims

In our School, we aim to provide a Curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This Policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our School who have been identified as 'gifted' and 'talented' according to national guidelines.

We respect the right of all children in our School, irrespective of differences in ability, to access a number of areas of learning, and to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development into active and responsible adults.

The aims of our School make specific reference to teaching and learning that takes into account the needs of all children. They also identify the commitment to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest standards. This Policy guides the way in which this happens for our gifted and talented children.

Through this Policy, we aim to:

- Ensure that we recognise and support the needs of our children.
- Enable children to develop to their full potential.
- Offer children opportunities to generate their own learning.
- Ensure that we challenge and extend the children through the work that we set them.
- Encourage children to think and work independently.

What do we mean by Gifted and Talented?

Gifted and Talented is the term applied to those children who are achieving, or have the potential to achieve, at a level substantially beyond the rest of their peer group. The DfES (2006) states that the term 'gifted' is used to refer to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects, such as English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. 'Talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in areas of the Curriculum requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities, such as in games and PE, Drama, Music or Art and Design.

Characteristics of Gifted and Talented Children

The QCA outlines generic characteristics which it states many people feel can be used to identify the majority of gifted and talented learners. These include the ability to:

- Think quickly and accurately.
- Work systematically.
- Generate creative working solutions.
- Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations.
- Communicate their thoughts and ideas well.
- Be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns.
- Achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts.
- Be particularly creative.
- Show great sensitivity or empathy.
- Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill.
- Make sound judgements.
- Be outstanding leaders or team members.
- Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the Curriculum.

Gifted children in English are 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.
- Latch on quickly to the conventions of different types of writing.
- 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.

Gifted children in Mathematics 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.

However, we recognise that gifted and talented children do not necessarily fit these expectations.

Strategies for Identification

The identification process is ongoing throughout the academic year and throughout a child's time with us at this School, recognising that some pupils will be easy to identify at a very early age while others will emerge later. Children are recognised as being Gifted or Talented by either their Class Teacher or a subject specialist. These children are recorded on a Whole School list compiled and updated by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator. This 'register' is fluid and recognises that a child has potential and is being given appropriate challenge and support whilst being monitored. We also keep a shadow cohort register for Maths and English which identifies all pupils who are in the top 10% of their year group, but who we do not feel are truly gifted in Maths or English. Parents are actively involved in the identification process and their opinions and in-depth knowledge of their child are actively sought and valued. This is particularly useful for 'talents' that we might see only limited evidence for in school, for example, in cheer leading or horse riding. If this is the case, contact is made with their relevant specialist teacher to enable us to further confirm and support the child. We also recognise that some children's gifts and talents may be hidden, for example, those for whom English is not their first language, those with specific learning or physical disabilities, and those from different cultural or disadvantaged socio-economic groups. We reassess pupils regularly.

We are developing a range of strategies to identify Gifted and Talented children, such as:

Quantitative and Qualitative Identification

The identification process begins when the child joins our School. Each child's Pre-School record gives details of their achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers enable us to add further details to these records.

Children undergo a baseline assessment within the first half-term of joining our Foundation class. This gives information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We discuss each child's baseline assessment information with the parent, and use this information when planning for individual needs. Those children who join us partly through their education are assessed by their Class Teacher on arrival and combined with assessment information from their previous school, they are then given a baseline assessment.

As the children progress through the School, we test them regularly to ensure that they are making the progress that we are expecting of them. We identify them as being gifted children when they achieve high levels of attainment in academic subjects, or talented if they have particular visio-spatial skills or practical abilities.

The children undertake national tests in Year 2, for English and Mathematics, and Year 6, for English and Mathematics. Teachers also test in Science. Teachers also make regular assessments of each child's progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum. On a termly basis, all children are formally assessed in reading, writing and Mathematics. We compare the information from these tests with a range of national and LEA data, in order to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress. This work is moderated by all teaching Staff. Additionally, we consider the child's rate of progress, including value-added data and reference to prior attainment/achievement. Our tracking system highlights children who may be gifted or a achieving highly in terms of the core subjects. This is monitored by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator and the Assessment Co-ordinator, plus the Literacy and Numeracy Co-ordinators, who work closely together to ensure these children are given specific targets and closely monitored to ensure they are reaching their potential.

On a day-to-day basis, the Class Teacher makes formative assessments of each child. This continuous monitoring and assessment helps guide Teachers to make accurate judgements. We recognise that some gifted and talented children do well in statutory National Curriculum tests, however this is not the case for all Gifted and Talented children. Additionally, being gifted and talented covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests.

Assertive mentoring is used to assess progress, identify 'gaps' in knowledge and understanding, enable teachers to plan and deliver lessons to 'fill' these gaps and to give children SMART targets which they are expected to take ownership of.

Teachers discuss the children's progress with parents at the termly consultation evenings, and report annually on each child's progress in July. Assertive mentoring discussions are an intrinsic part of these meetings. We recognise that parents know their children best and should be engaged as partners in their child's learning. To this end, we ask parents to inform us of their child's talents and interests. We are operating a two-tier system where the first is for interest whilst a second level is for those children who have their talents recognised and validated by a professional, for example, a sports coach or Music Teacher. Children are encouraged to share their outside school achievements in School, where they can be recognised and celebrated. A running record of these achievements is kept by the G&T Coordinator and these achievements are also celebrated in various displays around the school. Parents of children on the 'Gifted and Talented' Register are informed of this formally at Parents evening and through informal contact. However, all parents are made aware that being on the register does not automatically guarantee academic success.

Provision

Teachers in our School plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. We give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning. We recognise that gifted children make intellectual connections between what they are currently learning, what they have learnt before and the long term objective. As appropriate, we make the children aware of the 'big picture' and what we are working towards. We focus on assessment for learning.

There are five key aspects to planning for gifted and talented children:

- Breadth, working at more complex tasks which combine objectives; use or apply their understanding in less familiar contexts.
- Depth, the work through which an objective is taught may have greater complexity or abstraction.
- Acceleration, using objectives from those outlined for later years. The Primary Framework shows progression beyond the objectives in each year group, including the Year 6 progression to Year 7.
- Independence, encouraging children to set their own tasks, work with minimal support and extend ideas on their own.
- Reflection, making their understanding explicit, reflecting on and evaluating what has been achieved.

We aim to encourage thinking and problem-solving skills as a key factor in the development of all pupils' autonomy, self-confidence and 'learning how to learn' skills.

Children meet a variety of organisational strategies as they move through the School. Each strategy supports all children in their learning, but gives due regard to the more able and very able learner.

We offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children. These activities offer more able and very able children the opportunity to further extend their learning in a range of activities. Opportunities include sporting, musical, art, drama and clubs. Additionally, we make pupils and their parents aware of external opportunities within the wider community where they can further develop their abilities, particularly for those talented in Sports, Music and Drama.

We make use of:

- Skills specific to individual Staff members, Governors, parents and members of the local community.
- Visiting experts for training, lessons and clubs.
- Dedicated Gifted and Talented activities.
- Specialist clubs and societies.
- Other schools, organisations and competitions that they might organise.

Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in class. This offers Teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.

We aim to provide a safe and secure learning environment where every child achieves as highly as they can. As with all children, education for the gifted and talented should focus on both their intellectual development and their social and emotional needs. Through our PSHE Policy, we explicitly teach social skills and emotional literacy, helping both gifted and talented children and their peers to understand each other and respond positively to each child's attributes.

Transfer and Transition

Each child's individual 'Pupil Profile' is updated on a regular basis alongside their Assertive Mentoring records. These records are passed to the child's next Teacher as they move through the School. Additionally, informal discussions are held to ensure that the next Teacher is fully aware of each individual child's learning needs. As the children change schools or move on to Secondary School, these records are passed on.

Resources

Each class has access to topical display books. We have a good range of thesauruses and dictionaries, so that children's developing skills and levels of sophistication are anticipated. Reading material at all levels is also offered with pupils having full access to the School Library rather than being limited to a classroom selection.

Each class has Mathematical games covering a variety of key skills. Additionally, there is a central bank of Mathematical games, which can be sent home for homework. We also use the online Mathletics program.

The use of Information and Communications Technology is also used to support such learners, with all classes having access to tablets.

Monitoring and Evaluation

One Teacher coordinates the provision and practice within the School for gifted and talented children. The Co-ordinator will:

- Ensure that the G&T register is up to date.
- Ensure that the School G&T Policy is up to date.
- Ensure that the G&T shadow cohort register is up to date.
- Ensure that Staff make adequate provision for their G&T children.
- Review teaching arrangements for G&T children and encourage best practice.
- Provide advice and opportunities for the professional development of Staff.
- In conjunction with the SMT and Assessment Co-ordinator, monitor the progress and achievements of registered children.
- Attend G&T courses, cluster meetings, monitor teaching materials and update colleagues on developments in best practice.
- Provide, where possible, extra-curricular G&T activities.
- Survey the attitudes and needs of G&T pupils.
- Promote and organise G&T awareness opportunities, for example, Experience Day.