

The Deanery

Church of England High School and Sixth Form College



ABLE & TALENTED POLICY

MAY 2015

Rationale

It is recognised that 2% of young people may be categorised as 'Gifted' in the sense of possessing exceptional ability in most or many areas of experience. Up to 10% may be exceptionally 'Talented' in only certain specific areas.

The Deanery CE High School aims to provide for the individual needs of all pupils. Therefore, it is important that the needs of able and talented pupils should be recognised and strategies developed for their identification and support.

It is critical to recognise the existence of all round exceptional ability but we also acknowledge the greater number of pupils who are either Gifted or Talented in specific areas. There should be flexible provision for pupils requiring enrichment and support in order to achieve their full potential and raise their aspirations and attainment by developing their:

- o Ability to learn.
- o Range of knowledge.
- o Core skills such as problem solving.
- o Creativity.
- o Intellectual curiosity.
- o Specific talents.

A variety of processes will enable individual able and talented pupils to be identified. The curriculum will take into account the needs of able and talented pupils through differentiation, extension, enrichment and acceleration, making use of all available expertise and opportunities. The pastoral needs of able and talented pupils will be recognised and supported by the school.

Identification of the cohort of able and talented pupils

The identification of able and talented pupils is set as the top 10% of the cohort. However identifying those who are particularly gifted and talented in a particular area is not an easy task; consequently, a variety of methods should be employed in order to collate accurate information. Each method of identification has limitations, so we should not be too dogmatic in our approach, instead keeping an open mind. The school may take advantage of information about pupils from a variety of sources:

- o Teacher recommendation.
- o General checklists of the characteristics of gifted pupils will be used to support staff referral (see later).
- o Parents.
- o Peers.
- o Primary school.
- o Prior pupil knowledge will be taken into account, particularly at KS2 to KS3 transition.
- o Formal tests.
- o Records of National Curriculum attainment levels.
- o Extra-curricular activities.
- o Through observed performance in the classroom.

The two main identification strategies are likely to be use of data and staff referral. All teachers should know identified pupils, provide a suitable curriculum and enrichment opportunities for them and in turn monitor their progress.

Curriculum

The central aim of the school is to provide **all** of our pupils with educational experiences and opportunities that will enable them to discover and fulfil their own potential. All programmes of study will have opportunities for enrichment and extension activities.

Differentiation is built into our curriculum planning:

- o Differentiation by outcome. Pupils may respond at very different levels to the same initial stimulus.
- o Differentiation by task. Some materials or activities will be accessible to only the most able pupils.
- o Differentiation by pace. Academically more able pupils need the facility to proceed at a greater speed.

There is a commitment to developing extension and enrichment materials which:

- o Allow individuality of response.
- o Encourage creativity and imagination.
- o Satisfy developmental stage rather than chronological age.
- o Stress process rather than content.
- o Encourage high quality thinking/using higher order skills.
- o Provide many open-ended situations.
- o Give a sense of satisfaction and enjoyment.
- o Open up further opportunities for research.
- o Involve an abstract quality across the curriculum.
- o Involve problem solving and decision making.
- o Encourage empathy.

Differentiated homework will be made available when appropriate, including open-ended tasks.

As wide an expertise as possible should be used in providing for able and talented pupils. Suggested schemes may include:

- o Involvement with national associations to identify and make use of expertise from the community.
- o Activities provided by the LA.
- o Shared ventures with other schools.
- o National activities and special events.
- o Opportunities made available by university links.
- o Workshop activities.
- o Opportunities to exercise leadership and develop communication skills in a peer tutoring situation.
- o Summer schools and master classes.

Pastoral

Able and talented pupils need to be encouraged to integrate as fully as possible into the life of the school. Support structures are necessary which recognise their need to work with others of the same ability at times. For some pupils, their identification as academically more able or gifted and talented in a particular area may cause them problems.

All staff should bear the following points in mind:

- o Able and talented pupils may exhibit classic symptoms of 'deviant' behaviour owing to frustration, impatience and self-consciousness.
- o Pupils of high intellectual ability can appear way ahead of their chronological age. Social growth does not always keep pace.
- o Some able and talented pupils find their ability isolating and become loners.
- o Under-achievement may be caused by able and talented pupils feeling threatened by peer pressure.
- o All pupils respond to praise and it is just as important to able and talented pupils. There is a danger that praise is not given because expectations are so high.

Implementation of the policy

The school's Able and Talented Co-ordinator is responsible for co-ordinating the identification and developments of identified pupils across the school. Curriculum Leaders, Progress Leaders and subject staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy in their areas. A clear school policy gives direction to faculty policies for able and talented pupils, which will inform practical approaches to provision.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee on 13th May 2015

Date of next review: May 2017

APPENDIX

Positive characteristics of able and talented pupils – a general checklist

Pupils may demonstrate a few or many of these characteristics. Each one is significant, but a pupil may demonstrate his/her ability at different times with different colleagues.

- o Possesses extensive general knowledge.
- o Has a quick mastery and recall of information.
- o Has exceptional curiosity; shows good insight into cause and effect relationships.
- o Asks many provocative, searching questions.
- o Easily grasps underlying principles and needs the minimum of explanation.
- o Quickly makes generalisations.
- o Often sees unusual, rather than conventional relationships.
- o Listens to only part of the explanation.
- o Jumps stages in learning.
- o Leaps from the concrete to the abstract.
- o Is a keen and alert observer.
- o Sees greater significance in a story or a film etc.
- o When interested becomes absorbed for long periods.
- o Is persistent in seeking task completion.
- o Is more than usually interested in 'adult problems' such as religion, politics etc.
- o Displays intellectual playfulness: fantasises, imagines, manipulates ideas.
- o Is concerned to adapt and improve institutions, objects, and systems.
- o Has a keen sense of humour; sees humour in the unusual.
- o Appreciates verbal puns, cartoons, jokes etc.
- o Criticises constructively.
- o Unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination.
- o Mental speed faster than physical capabilities.
- o Prefers to talk rather than write.
- o Reluctant to practise skills already mastered.
- o Reads rapidly and retains what is read.
- o Has advanced understanding and use of language.
- o Shows sensitivity or empathy towards others.
- o Sees the problem quickly and takes the initiative.

In addition to the above characteristics, gifted pupils may also display the following characteristics in certain subjects:

English

Reading

- o Demonstrate a broad-based response to texts.
- o Pursue a wide range of texts independently.
- o See reading as part of a larger process – empathising, reflecting, interpreting, formulating opinions.

Writing

- o Imitate and manipulate voice, style and genre.
- o Transfer skills learnt in one form or another.
- o Generalise, moving easily away from what is immediate and concrete.
- o Tailor writing to even the most ill-defined or difficult of audiences.
- o Use varied syntax and extended vocabulary.
- o Write with originality, interpreting and formulating opinions.
- o Use language with originality.
- o Identify key points and follow logical arguments when listening.
- o Reinterpret written material for talk which engages its audience.

Maths

- o See the formal structure of the problem.
- o Spot redundant or missing information.
- o Suggest plausible ideas for the solution of a novel type of problem.
- o See when a method is transferable to another topic.
- o Make jumps in reasoning.
- o Change tack when a method fails while retaining its vital features.
- o Criticise inelegant solutions.
- o Retain former levels of competence with little revision.

Science

- o Demonstrate exceptional speed of thought, e.g. rapid response to new ideas.
- o Show caution when accepting explanations for experimental evidence.
- o Suggest open investigation.
- o Recognise that there are alternative, often conflicting, ideas in science.
- o Show creativity in suggesting alternative solutions which draw upon a wide or specialist knowledge of the subject.
- o See links and relationships between data not spotted by others.
- o Produce responses that have involved superior reasoning and considerable mental effort.

Negative characteristics of able and talented pupils – a checklist

Staff need to be alert to pupils who demonstrate some of the characteristics outlined below and who may be in need of greater support or challenge.

- o Anti-school.
- o Orally good while written work poor.
- o Apparently bored.
- o Restless and inattentive.
- o Absorbed in private world.
- o Tactless and impatient with slower minds.
- o Friendly only with older pupils.
- o Self-critical.
- o Poor social relations with peers and teachers.
- o Emotionally unstable.
- o Outwardly self-sufficient.