

21.1 ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED

Introduction

We believe in providing the best possible provision for pupils of all abilities. We plan our teaching and learning so that each child can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement. Our School has a responsibility to ensure sustainable and effective provision for the needs of gifted and talented pupils. The aims of this policy are aspirational and evolutionary. Gifted and talented provision should meet the specific learning needs of these pupils. Such provision should improve achievement for all pupils by giving appropriate challenges. Provision for the gifted and talented should be rooted in the notion of 'developing expertise', and is not just about passing more exams. Gifted and Talented Education includes able, gifted and talented pupils.

Definitions

The following definitions have been sourced from the *Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service* (HIAS) and form a part of their recommendations. We believe these definitions to be useful and accurate. They are:

- **Able:** pupils who have the potential or capacity to develop expertise in one or more areas of learning or performance;
- **Gifted:** pupils who have a broad range of achievement at a level well above average, typically in the more academic subjects;
- **Talented:** pupils who excel in one or more specific fields, typically those that call for performance skills, such as sport or music, but who do not necessarily perform at a high level across all areas of learning.

There will be a percentage of the children in our school who will be considered as gifted and/or talented. Provision will be made for these children within normal class teaching, but sometimes we will provide enrichment or extension activities to promote their skills and talents still further. The 1993 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice did not include gifted and talented in the definition of those having Special Educational Needs. Children who fall into the category of very able learners require a specific orientation to ensure their needs are addressed. The following criteria illustrates the possible dichotomy between bright/able children and truly gifted and talented individuals:

Bright child	Gifted and talented child
Interested in excess of the norm	Highly curious; wonders a lot and articulates a creative response
Often has good ideas	Inevitably has strong insights and often conspicuous signs of lateral thinking
Answers questions appropriately with strong degree of accuracy	Elaborates on sharp insightful observations; makes excellent connections with other information domain - good at bridging
Repetition is required for strong skill	One or two repetitions are required for mastery of deep understanding
Has strong propensity to understand	Constructs abstractions readily
Grasps meanings beyond that which expected	Draws inferences, readily concludes would be
Recreates with great accuracy	Creates original work
Solid technician or operator	Readily creates and invents
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Has a good ability to memorise	Very good at memorising and making informed guesses
Makes sound observations when shown how	Highly self-critical and has a tendency to set exceedingly high standards
Enjoys and motivated by straightforward sequential challenges	Thrives on complex challenges

For identification purposes gifted and talented children can be grouped as follows:

- Broadly gifted - excel in all they do and enjoy that success; easy to identify;
- Talented - possess a particular, if not striking, ability in one area, e.g. Maths or Music; relatively easy to identify as they tend to be academically able and successful;
- Rebellious gifted - possess some behavioural difficulties which manifest themselves as potentially disruptive and under-achieve; often such children are identified as purely disruptive or as a lower ability;
- Creatively gifted - deep thinkers who may be unpopular with peers due to a perceived lack of social skills; may be incorrectly identified as disruptive;
- Concealed gifted - under-achieving children who do not want to be different from their peers so they may merge into their peer group; often such children are incorrectly identified as underachievers or simply less able.

While we recognise and cater for these particular categories of children in our school, at the same time, we respect the right of all children, irrespective of differences in ability, to access various areas of learning, both for their self-fulfilment, and for their eventual development into active and responsible adults. We value the individuality of all our children and ensure that our teaching and learning takes into account the needs of all the children. We are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. This policy guides the way in which this happens for our very able and more able children. In our mission statement, we declare accordingly that we value the individuality of all our children.

Aims

The school's aims and objectives encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others while embracing initiative. The school aims to:

- ensure that school policies include a focus on the needs of gifted and talented children;
- develop effective school-wide strategies to identify, educate and support the gifted and talented;
- develop a sustainable and effective curriculum, and extracurricular provision for all able, gifted and talented pupils;
- try to ensure that provision has optimum impact on the progress of able, gifted and talented pupils;
- explore and develop means of collaboration to help able, gifted and talented pupils and provide for their needs;
- 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.

Identification of gifted and talented children

We use a range of strategies to identify gifted and talented children. The identification process is ongoing, and begins when the child joins our school. Each child's pre-school record gives details of achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers enable us to add further details to these records. Observations by the teacher take place during a child's first term in Reception. This gives information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We discuss each child's Foundation Stage profile with the parent or carer, and use this information when planning for individual needs. As the children progress through the school, we test them regularly to ensure that they are making the sort of progress that we are expecting of them in their personal targets. We identify them as very able and more able children when they achieve high levels of attainment across the curriculum (very able), or in particular skills or aspects of subjects (more able).

Multiple criteria and sources of evidence are used to identify able, gifted and talented pupils within the school. **An accurate record of able, gifted and talented pupils is maintained and updated at regular intervals.** The record is supported by a comprehensive monitoring, progress planning and reporting system. The processes of identification are regularly reviewed in light of pupil performance and value-added data.

We track the progress of all children in each class at regular intervals throughout the year. The two policies: Pupil Assessment and Record Keeping (Foundation Stage) and Summary of KS1 and KS2 Subject Assessment and Tracking explain this process in detail. Whole class tracking allows us to more easily identify children who are performing at levels significantly higher than most of the children in the class. The children undertake GL assessment at the end of each year: Progress in Maths and Progress in English. End of unit tests for English and Maths are administered throughout each term. Also children in KS2 sit CAT (Cognitive Abilities Test) each year and this information is then reported back to the parents. Teachers also make regular assessments of each child's progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum. We compare the information from these tests with a range of national data, in order to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress.

Each teacher regularly reviews the children's progress and records this in their Assessment File. Teachers discuss the children's progress with parents at Parents Evenings, and provide a termly report on each child's progress. Referral, assessment and identification can come from diverse sources, e.g.:

- teachers request following observation
- parental request
- management request
- following blanket testing of Foundation Stage
- our assessment based on National Curriculum Tests (interim, optional and subject)
- GL Tests or school exams.

Aptitudes in English and Mathematics

Gifted children in English are identified when they:

- demonstrate relatively high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
- use research skills more effectively to synthesise information;
- enjoy reading, and respond to a range of texts at a more advanced level;
- use a wider vocabulary, and enjoy working with words;
- see issues from a broader range of perspectives;
- use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

Gifted children in mathematics are identified when they:

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

The Need for Early Identification

Like many other children, gifted and talented children can often fail to achieve their potential and may be unable to cope with their abilities and can suffer from many difficulties. Early identification, assessment and provision is important for gifted/talented children for the following reasons. It can minimise difficulties that can be encountered when interventions and provision occur. These difficulties are typically:

- low confidence and self-esteem;
- high degree of frustration and self-blame;
- poor study skills;
- social isolation and a belief that they are misunderstood and different to their peers;
- problems with concentration;
- living in own 'private' world.

It can maximise the likely positive response of the child, for e.g. gifted and talented children who are underachieving may be given a much needed boost by realising their potential by achieving a high IQ rating. It can allow for a temporary learning difficulty to be overcome and for future learning to be unaffected. The process starts by referral to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Able children, like all children having special education needs, have their own unique cluster of characteristics. The psychological imprints that learning abilities may have caused will effect individuals in different ways. Often dyspraxic able children feel greater levels of social threat for example than dyslexic children. ADHD able children typically will be less emotionally resilient than others. It is difficult to make generalised statements about features of the failing able child but there is recognition of certain characteristics which are considered in regard to the management of special needs.

- **Coping Strategies.** Able children with special needs do not necessarily have heightened emotional resources. Often the opposite is the case. These children may have suffered from inaccurate assumptions based on coping expectations which fall short of requirement. Sometimes such children are skilled at masking difficulties.
- **Parental Expectation.** High scores on such tests as the WISC may suggest that the child has strong potential across all or most intellectual activities and/or spatial reasoning. No-one would assume for example a gifted musician need be similarly gifted in say English, chess or Drama. Often able children are expected to achieve a high level in all areas despite evidence that seldom is ability expressed uniformly across the board. Realistic expectations need to reflect the best interests of the child. Parents and carers may need to be reassured that such areas as setting (English and Maths), the nature of support, general educational management and expectations are considered responses given the nature and effect of learning abilities.
- **Developed Verbal Reasoning.** Good language resources can increase the ability to grasp complex concepts. Such skills can also arm a child to further develop avoidance and manipulative strategies. To avoid exposure and any resulting ill effect, able children may use language forcefully to protect self-esteem and market self-worth as opposed to a strongly developed adjunct to learning. In some cases a lack of tolerance is proportional to the command of verbal reasoning.
- **Social Difficulties.** Able children, like all children generally, require recognition for their successes. If they experience an overdose of failure heightened by untoward discrepancy in performance given expectation, social problems may be a further by-product of such experiences. The quest to prove worth by marketing intelligence can intrude on social reasoning.
- **Agenda Search.** Able children who rely on determining factors that give reasoning an edge, may assume answers are too accessible to justify the challenge. They may search for hidden possibilities and thus steer an inaccurate course. The resulting wrong answer may cause acute embarrassment.
- **More Stretching/Challenge.** Sometimes able children with special abilities and learning styles have a higher threshold of boredom. Even though processing skills may be developed, filing and accessing may be poor. Despite the need to stretch and challenge to keep them on tract, stimulated and motivated, due consideration is required regarding aspects of inefficient functioning.
- **Concept Command.** Given the possibly superior bridging abilities, concepts may be grasped readily. This need not imply that they can be expressed adequately. To gain recognition able special needs children may have developed an appetite to forcefully express knowledge publicly and thus advertise their success. When denied success in certain areas of functioning there may be a need to set the record straight in terms of rectifying any untoward publicity when contrasted with others.
- **Frustration.** Able children may be better able to identify their own possible dysfunction. This may lead them to feel very sad or worried about their lives. It can lead to depression and acute frustration.

The school policy on such children is:

- to help them to understand the reasons behind how their minds works, any under achievement and that this is a temporary inconvenience and not a lifelong handicap. They require help in managing the dichotomy in learning variation;
- to rectify untoward responses to learning style as quickly as possible;

- to help them develop key life skills. Able special needs children may require a considered intervention. They may have a better developed contribution to make toward their own assessment. Also, they may have a stronger potential to develop self-advocacy skills;
- to assist them in utilising strengths. Able special needs children may require specific help in learning how to learn. Given the real strengths, these could be employed to help overcome any weaknesses;
- to reassure and encourage. Such children may need to become more accepting towards themselves, especially if they have become reliant on seeking the advantage from expressing ability. Like all children, they need to know that the teacher cares and is with them and for them and skilled in techniques to put things right which may need due attention.

Teaching and learning

A range of methods/strategies are employed to meet the needs of the able, gifted and talented pupils. Teaching and learning is suitably challenging and varied to promote breadth, depth and pace, and to promote high achievement. Innovation and new technologies are used to raise achievement and stimulate motivation. Innovative models of learning beyond the classroom are developed in collaboration with local, national and international schools and colleges to enhance teaching and learning. Coherent strategies are developed to direct and develop individual expert performance via external agencies.

Our teachers 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, such as by providing:

- a common activity that allows the children to respond at their own levels;
- an enrichment activity that broadens a child's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
- an individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- the opportunity for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning.

Children are familiarised with a variety of organisational strategies as they move through the school. These strategies can be used by all children, but give due scope to higher achievers. From Year One, we set individual pupil targets for Literacy and Numeracy. The children know their targets and they are updated every half-term, or earlier if a child reaches his/her target(s). Where appropriate children will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The school endeavours to ensure those designated as 'gifted and talented' are appropriately challenged and provided for through the setting of individual targets in Maths and English. Gifted and talented children may be academically several years ahead of their peers but are still likely to be emotionally and socially at their chronological age.

In meeting the needs of gifted and talented, the following is considered:

- planning schemes of work and the broader curriculum with specific consideration being given to the gifted and talented children;
- planning and implementing related issues, e.g. resources, differentiation, teaching and learning styles;
- developing enrichment and extension materials to stretch the most able;
- the structure and dynamic of different teaching groups.

We offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children. These activities offer higher achievers the opportunity to further extend their learning in a range of activities. Opportunities include a range of sporting and musical clubs.

Learning is also enriched through regular 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. The children will also have the opportunity to experience a range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning.

Management strategies

There is a nominated teacher who coordinates the provision and practice within the school for gifted and talented children. The coordinator's role includes:

- running a register of gifted and talented pupils, and keeping it up to date;
- monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken across all curriculum areas by the higher achievers;
- regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for these particular children;
- monitoring their progress through termly discussions with teachers;
- supporting staff in the identification of these children;
- providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies;
- liaising with parents and carers, the Proprietor and LA officers on related issues.
- To ensure there is a focus on gifted and talented children in the school;
- to nominate a member of staff to take a special interest in gifted and talented children.

School Initiative

The school ensures that staff development and deployment shows an awareness of gifted and talented children, and that gifted and talented children are discussed at Staff Meetings under the Role of Director of Studies and at Key Stage Meetings. This includes INSET arrangements. The school reviews the curriculum annually in order that it retains continuity, progression, breadth and balance, and ensures that gifted and talented pupils are considered in school policies concerned with teaching and learning and in schemes of work.

Standards

Levels of attainment and achievement of able, gifted and talented pupils should be high, in relation to the rest of the school.

Enabling Curriculum Entitlement and Choice

Curricular organization is flexible to allow pupils to have enrichment, subject choice, and to work beyond their age and/or phase, and across subjects. The curriculum offers personalised learning pathways to help maximise individual potential.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment data is used by all teachers across the school to ensure challenge and sustained progress in individual pupils' learning. Formative assessment and individual target setting is part of established practice. Self and peer assessment is part of classroom practice.

Transfer and Transition

There are clear processes to ensure productive transfer of information i.e. from school to school, class to class, and year to year. Transfer data is used to inform planning of teaching and learning at subject and at individual level to ensure progression according to ability rather than age.

Leadership

The Principal, Senior Leadership Team, The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the Proprietor are responsible for leading gifted and talented provision within the school.

Policy

The gifted and talented policy is integral to the school's inclusion agenda and linked to the school improvement plan. The policy directs and reflects best practice in the school.

School Ethos and Pastoral Care

Success is celebrated across a wide range of abilities. Equal emphasis is placed on high achievement and emotional well-being.

Staff Development

Staff needs are regularly audited and an appropriate range of professional development in able, gifted and talented education organized. Professional development is informed by research and collaboration within and beyond the school. Priorities for the development of able, gifted and talented provision is monitored through Performance Management processes.

Resources

Appropriate resources and funding will be allocated to develop good practice throughout the school. The impact of resources is reviewed in terms of value.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance against targets is rigorously evaluated against clear criteria to inform whole school self-evaluation processes. Self-evaluation challenges existing provision and informs the development of further innovative practice in collaboration with other schools.

Engaging the Community, Families and Others

Parents and carers are informed of developments and encouraged to be actively engaged in extending their children's education. Support from outside agencies is integrated. There is a strong emphasis on collaborative and innovative work with other schools/colleges.


Monitoring and review

The Proprietor monitors the school's provision for gifted and talented pupils. The Proprietor works with the school's gifted and talented coordinator in support of the school's efforts to help these pupils to reach their full potential.

The coordinator for the provision for gifted and talented pupils provides feedback to the Proprietor on an annual basis. The monitoring includes feedback from parents or carers and children, as well as regular classroom observations of teaching and learning, and termly evaluations of children's written work. The coordinator collects samples of work from the higher achievers, in order to demonstrate the standards that they are achieving. We use these examples to inform the process of identifying gifted and talented children.

Signed:

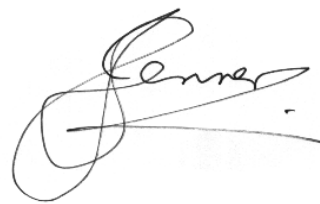
Date: October 16



Mr J. Jenner jr.
Principal



Mr J. Bushrod
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Mrs J. Jenner
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