

GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPIL POLICY

At Beechwood Sacred Heart School we aim to provide appropriate education for all able, gifted and talented pupils, to enable every individual to achieve to the limit of his or her potential. In the case of 'gifted and talented pupils' we aim to identify their particular strengths as early as possible to provide them with every possible opportunity to develop their specific talents or abilities to the full.

Definitions:

'Able' pupils are understood to be 'those with strong intellectual and academic abilities'. An **able pupil** may be defined as one who achieves, or has the ability to achieve, at a level significantly higher than his or her peer group in the School.

Gifted pupils are generally taken to be those in the top 5% of the national ability range, and this is the definition used by the Department for Education .

Talented pupils are understood to be those who 'excel in specific areas, for example, music, art, design, drama, dance or sport', thus possessing special ability, notable talent or aptitude in that particular field.

Identification:

Gifted and talented pupils may demonstrate their particular strengths in many different ways and so identification is not always straightforward. It is matter of everyday policy for our teachers to be prepared to recognise indications that may lead to categorisation as a 'gifted' or a 'talented' pupil and, having done so, ensure that all lessons and activities exploit the talent and potential of the highest achievers.

In the classroom teachers at Beechwood aspire to deliver 'outstanding teaching' in both 'design of lesson' and in the modelling of 'behaviour' in lessons. Excellence in teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement and so delivering lessons that motivate and inspire the brightest in the class is central.

The School's pioneering programme 'Thinking Schools' enables all pupils, but particularly those who are more able, to develop the necessary skills to think differently, to think more broadly, more positively and more laterally. This is an award winning initiative that has shown tangible benefits in the learning and progress of pupils.

Outside of the classroom the talents and the skills of the staff ensure that talent is recognised, nurtured and exploited so as to give a pupil the very best opportunity to grow in in their talent beyond the confines of School, whether that is at a local level, at county level, a national level or, indeed, internationally.

Recognition of talent and particular gifts become evident in different ways. Teachers may recognise or identify special ability through:

- consistently high achievement
- rapid grasp of new concepts
- flash moments of understanding
- working consistently ahead of peers
- demand and delivery of more challenging work

Other indicators that a gifted or talented pupil may display include:

- demonstrating superior powers of reasoning
- using a superior quality and quantity of vocabulary
- possessing unusual imagination
- having a great intellectual curiosity
- following complex directions easily
- having reading interests that cover a wide range of subjects
- exhibiting keen powers of observation
- aptitude or skill in sport, music, drama or art that is above the expectation for the age range

Here at Beechwood, we identify ability and higher functioning skills (for example, strong readers or aptitude in comprehension) in a variety of ways including 'objective measures' of underlying ability which include:

- SATs (Prep)
- CATS (Prep) & CAT 4 (Senior)
- COPs (Prep)
- MALT
- NFER Maths
- ALIS (6th Form)
- Maths Challenge Results
- Lucid Exact
- Reading tests
- Diagnostic assessment by Educational Psychologists
- GCSE results
- Parental suggestion
- Teacher nomination
- Knowledge of outstanding achievement outside School

Again, it is important to understand that gifted and talented pupils may possess abilities other than those demonstrated through academic achievement.

Strategies for meeting needs:

All able, gifted and talented pupils are placed on the School's G&T register, which is held by the Head of Learning Development. Candidates for inclusion on the Register should be recommended to the Head of Learning Development through the same process as for any other specific learning need.

The Able, Gifted and Talented Co-Ordinator then suggests the most appropriate strategy for meeting the needs of each pupil.

All lessons are to be delivered teaching to the highest ability range and differentiated appropriately for other learners in the class. Differentiation can be achieved in many different ways, e.g.:

- Differentiation by outcome – the same material, stimulus, or tasks are used for all pupils. Differentiation is achieved by individuals answering at their own levels of ability.
- Differentiation by resource – this method is based upon the fact that some pupils are capable of working with more advanced resources than others.
- Differentiation by task – a variety of tasks is provided so as to provide for the range of individual pupils in the class. More able children can start further along the road.
- Differentiation by dialogue – the most important resource for any child is not paper but human. The vocabulary and complexity of language used needs to vary for different pupils.
- Differentiation by support – the amount and degree of help provided can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Differentiation by pace – some pupils need to move forward very gradually while more able pupils are able to sustain a much quicker programme.

In some individual cases, an extended programme of enrichment may be required. The A, G & T Co-ordinator will mentor pupils identified on the A, G & T Register. These mentoring sessions will apply not only to those identified as either ‘gifted’ or ‘talented’, but also to those who are identified as ‘able’, and particularly to those who are not achieving to their ability. The individual targets set at these mentoring sessions will then be disseminated to Departments to inform the teaching and learning within subject areas. Individual departments should apply their own appropriate strategies, together with the methods of differentiation above, to develop our able pupils which may involve some of the following:

- extra-curricular opportunities to extend and challenge
- use of open-ended project work
- visits to places of special interest
- university courses and lectures
- enrichment programmes run by other outside bodies

All Departments should include possible strategies for extending and challenging able, gifted and talented pupils in their own policy statement.

The DFE advises that the setting of individual pupil targets, which are relayed to both pupil and parent, is a key strategy in raising levels of achievement across all ability groups.

The effectiveness of this Policy is monitored by the inclusion for discussion of all pupils on the A, G & T Register at all Subject Teacher Meetings. The progress of each pupil is further monitored by Form Tutors and Heads of Division and the Director of Studies for both Senior and Prep schools.

Reviewed September 2018, to be reviewed September 2019