

Policy for More Able and Talented Pupils

At St Thomas' School, we value all pupils equally and endeavour to ensure that each child should have the opportunity to realise his/her potential in a challenging and supportive environment. Our school will have, at any time, talented pupils, some of whom may be exceptionally able and this may be in one or more areas of learning.

Aims:

1. To implement the procedures and strategies that will address the needs of an identified cohort of more able and talented pupils.
2. To ensure that more able and talented pupils are motivated to achieve to the best of their ability.
3. To provide opportunities for more able and talented pupils to work at high cognitive levels and /or to develop specific skills.
4. To make use of links with other schools and the wider community to enhance learning opportunities.

Definitions:

"An able child, as defined by our school, is one who achieves, or has the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of the peer group. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range." (Eyre, 1999)

A 'gifted' pupil is one who has the capacity for or demonstrates high levels of performance in an academic area.

A 'talented' pupil is one who has a specific ability in a non- academic area.

Physical Talent	Sports, game, dexterity
Visual/Performing abilities	Dance, movement, drama
Mechanical Ingenuity	Construction, object assembly, working solutions
Outstanding leadership	Organiser, outstanding team member, sound judgements
Social Awareness	Sensitivity, empathy, care
Creativity	Artistic, musical, linguistic
Problem Solving	Finding solutions across the curriculum

Identification

The more able pupils are identified using a variety of methods which include prior attainment (EYFS data, KS 1 SATs and KS 2 SATs), staff nomination, on-going assessment and scrutiny of pupil's work. Only after consideration of all available evidence should pupils be identified as 'more able'.

Staff should be aware of the indicators of underachieving pupils when identifying the 'more able'; the best in the class/target group are not necessarily the 'more able'. They should consider that more able pupils could be children with; high ability but low motivation, of good verbal ability but poor writing skills, very able but with short attention span or very able with poor social skills.

More able pupils are generally considered to possess the following characteristics:

- Show great intellectual maturity and enjoy engaging in depth with subject material
- Actively and enthusiastically engage in discussions
- Show a passion for particular subjects and seek to pursue them

The talented pupils are identified using a variety of methods which staff nomination, on-going observation within school and input from parents or outside agencies. Only after consideration of all available evidence should pupils be identified as 'talented'.

As a school, we keep an ongoing register of any pupil identified as more able or talented.

Teaching Strategies and Classroom organisation

Teaching styles for the more able pupils should be more open-ended and flexible. There is a need to allow the more able pupil opportunities to 'take risk' in their learning, and effective teaching for them will reflect this. More able pupils should be encouraged and given opportunities to think creatively and divergently.

In our school we have assessment for learning well embedded, along with provision for independent learning and thinking skills (for example Bloom's Taxonomy) which will provide a positive learning environment for more able and talented pupils.

A combination of the following methods of support will be given:

Enrichment

Involves offering a wide variety of opportunities, both within and outside the curriculum, exposing the more able and talented pupils to experiences not usually encountered as part of the curriculum.

Extension

Developing a deeper understanding through tackling more challenging questions and tasks, demonstrating higher levels of thinking, and presenting increasingly sophisticated responses.

Within each classroom, work is differentiated to take account of learners' needs so that all children are provided with opportunities to succeed. Targets in Literacy and Maths are also differentiated.

The school aims to provide every opportunity appropriate to the needs of more able and talented pupils. A range of school based enrichment opportunities allow more able and talented pupils to develop their skills outside of the normal school timetable (for example Maths Masters, Maths Week challenges, Learning Buddies and Safety Officers.)

The school also participates in cluster More Able and Talented workshops which cover a range of subjects and topics. This enables children to mix with like-minded peers and access specialist coaching and teaching.

Enrichment opportunities are available outside the classroom with a wide range of clubs. The school has good links with its local secondary school and is able to use these for extra provision when needed. These links are well used during the transition between primary and secondary phases when staff from the secondary school prepare and deliver some lessons for Y6 children.

The Role of the MAT Co-ordinators

The responsible teachers for MAT are to maintain a register for MAT and to ensure that appropriate records are kept. The coordinators are to liaise with subject coordinators to identify strategies and resources to achieve the aims of the policy.

The Role of the Class Teacher/Target Group Teacher

- a) Ensure that medium term plans reflect the Whole School Policy and include class/target group activities that are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils (including more able pupils)
- b) Provide pupils with opportunities to extend their skills by regularly promoting problem solving, open ended and investigative activities
- c) Recognise that setting more work for pupils is not necessarily beneficial. More able pupils are more inclined to respond to higher level work that is more challenging, rather than more work of a similar level that is likely to be resented

Provision for MAT pupils

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are utilised through our schemes of work. During policy review we shall ensure that every curriculum area will have a reference to MAT children. We aim to:

- Encourage all pupils to be independent learners
- Recognise achievement
- Be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender and social circumstances on learning and high achievement
- Always provide work at an appropriate level
- Provide opportunities for pupils to work with like minded peers

School based provision

- Schools Clubs
- Enrichment opportunities
- Opportunities for performance
- Artists in residence
- Specialist teaching
- Partnerships with secondary schools
- Residential Experiences
- Subject weeks

- Language Day

Out of school provision

- Local workshops each half term e.g. South Warrington Primary Cluster workshops at local schools and in house
- National schemes/ Competitions/ Festivals

Homework

In accordance with school policy, homework should be set for our most able pupils that stimulates, enriches and extends their learning in school.

Monitoring and Assessment

On-going assessment, recording and reporting is in accordance with current whole school policy. Assessments will take place each half term in order to monitor progress of all pupils and will inform future planning.

Process for review and development

This policy will be reviewed every two years

School based provision:

- School clubs
- Fast tracking groups
- Enrichment opportunities
- Opportunities for performance
- Artists in residence
- Specialist teaching
- Partnerships with secondary schools

Out of school provision:

Local workshops each half-term
National schemes/Competitions/festivals

Role of the Coordinator:

The Responsible Teacher for G&T is to co-ordinate an audit programme to monitor School Development.

The co-ordinator is to maintain a register for G&T and to ensure that appropriate records are kept. The co-ordinator is to liaise with subject co-ordinators to identify strategies and resources to achieve the aims of the policy.

Process for review and development:

This policy will be reviewed every two years.