

WESSEX PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY DOCUMENT - ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS

Introduction

This policy outlines the purpose, nature and management of working with able, gifted and talented pupils. It reflects the view of the teaching staff and was drawn up as a result of staff discussion. It has the full agreement of the Governing Body who approved it at their meeting in July 2007. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of all the teaching staff and will be monitored by the leading Gifted and Talented teacher and by the Headteacher. This policy will be reviewed regularly.

We believe we should provide teaching that makes learning challenging and enjoyable, with all pupils achieving their full potential. We endeavour to help all pupils develop their skills and abilities intellectually, physically, artistically and creatively. Gifted and talented pupils should be given the opportunity to study subjects to a greater breadth and depth. We aim to provide opportunities to develop their specific skills and talents. We are also mindful of the importance of our role in helping to develop the whole child and not just one aspect of their abilities.

Definition

Gifted and talented pupils are those who demonstrate a significantly higher level of ability and/or potential than most pupils of the same age in one or more curriculum areas or in any of the following:

- physical talent
- artistic talent
- mechanical ingenuity
- leadership
- high IQ
- creativity.

It is worth remembering that able pupils can also be:

- good all-rounders
- high achievers in one area
- of high ability but of low motivation
- of good verbal ability but have poor writing skills
- very able but with a short attention span
- very able with poor social skills
- keen to disguise their abilities.

We have chosen to use the terms exceptionally able, more able, able and talented.

Exceptionally able: A minority of children (possibly 0.5% or less) who are capable of exceptional achievement in one or more areas of the curriculum; often several years ahead of what is normally expected of the age group

Most Able: A group of the highest attainers (possibly 5%) of the whole ability range.

More Able: A group of children (possibly 10%) of the whole ability range who demonstrate very high levels of attainment

Talented: A group of children (possibly 30%) who excel at sports, games or the visual and performing arts.

Identification

In identifying gifted and talented pupils, Wessex Primary School makes use of hard data, including the results of National Curriculum tests and a wide range of qualitative data, including teacher assessment, pupil observation, examination of their work and assessment by a coach from an external agency, for example, Wycombe Wanderers Football Club. Parents are also able to nominate their child through the 'Golden Post Box' system. The school makes sure the identification process is rigorous, transparent and fair. We do not discriminate against any group of children and include pupils who join the school after Reception as well as those who are late developers.

Where attainment is not high but there are indications of potential high ability, the school strives to identify that potential and nurture it.

Our aim is to build a comprehensive picture of each child's ability. When an able, gifted and talented pupil is identified through teacher assessment and professional judgement, further assessment will be carried out through:

- discussion with colleagues
- analysis of information from national and school-based tests
- continuous assessment using open/differentiated tasks
- careful record-keeping, collation of evidence, e.g. samples of pupils' work
- discussion with colleagues
- consultation with parents
- analysis of termly challenge group

Testing of individual pupils may be carried out by a member of staff where appropriate.

Underachievement

It is not uncommon for able, gifted and talented children to underachieve. These children may:

- be self critical
- demonstrate poor social relationships
- be emotionally unstable.

The reasons for a child's underachievement may include:

- peer pressure
- the child's emotional development not matching his or her intellectual ability
- the policy and curriculum of the school not sufficiently geared to helping able children
- parents who are unable to help at home.

Possible strategies for dealing with under achievement include:

- plenty of praise
- high expectations of the child by all concerned
- Integrating the child fully into the life of the class
- building the child's self esteem
- involving the pupil in decisions about his or her education
- tutoring younger children in their areas of strength.

A further form will need to be completed for children who appear to be under achieving identifying evidence of and possible causes of this underachievement.

Whole-school Strategies

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into all our schemes of work.

We aim to:

- create an ethos where pupils feel good about achieving excellence
- encourage all pupils to become independent learners
- provide appropriate resources
- provide a flexible organisation, offering opportunities for the able pupils to work independently or with older pupils of the same ability
- celebrate achievement
- involve pupils in decision-making, including producing newsletters and as members of the School's Council
- use of links with local secondary schools.

Classroom Strategies

Through effective planning, assessment, record-keeping and liaison with children's previous teachers we aim to:

- establish what they have done previously in order to prevent repetition
- reduce peer pressure to underachieve
- provide challenges through high-quality tasks for enrichment and extension
- plan work, so that there is always extension material for able children
- differentiate appropriately
- allow the children to make choices about, and organise, their own work
- set individual, challenging targets

- set individual homework
- expect them to carry out, unaided, tasks that stretch their capabilities
- develop their ability to evaluate and check their work
- improve their study skills.

Extra-curricular Activities

Wessex Primary School provides a range of extra activities for our able, gifted and talented pupils.

Out of the classroom pupils can:

- take part in extra-curricular activities and clubs
- take part in local, regional or national competitions, quizzes and debates
- go on educational visits
- go on residential trips.

Professional Development

Staff attend courses to develop and update their skills on the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

Monitoring

The teachers assess the progress of gifted and talented pupils through normal classroom practice. Additional monitoring is carried out by the Leading Gifted and Talented teacher. The results of the school's regular assessment activities are also used to provide information on the progress of these children.

HL June 2007