



St. John's C.E. Primary School

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Policy for: Able and Talented

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Rationale

'St. John's Church of England Primary School is a happy and vibrant community with Christian values. The school is committed to nurture and celebrate the varied talents of all its children and to enable them to achieve the best possible progress, whilst preparing them for life and the challenges they will meet.'

St John's Vision:

High standards through a caring community

Five Core Values:

At St Johns we hold five values core to our whole school philosophy and these should reflect our aims and practice within our policies. These are:

- Core Standards
- Life Skills
- Christian Values
- Wider Opportunities
- Community

'Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another.'

Nelson Mandela

The aim of this policy is to enable the identification and provision for able and talented children within St John's C. E. Primary school.

Aims

We aim to enrich and extend provision for the able and talented, and so enable all children to achieve their full potential.

Definition

The school recognises, in line with Department for Education guidelines, that 'able and talented children are those children who achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of their year group.' At St John's, we identify these children as working at mastery.

- **Able** – Children who have abilities in one or more subjects in the statutory school curriculum other than art and design, music and P.E.
- **Talented** – Children who have abilities in art and design, music, P.E., or in sports or performing arts such as dance and drama.

Identification

At St. John's the following criteria can be used to identify able and talented children:

- **Able** - most able within a class in literacy, mathematics i.e. achieving at mastered or greater depth against their year group expectations in these curriculum areas.
- **Talented** - Those children who show exceptional talent in areas other than literacy or mathematics. These areas may or may not be subjects on the school curriculum. There are no limits to the number of children identified as talented for each class.

Summative assessment

Tests are not completely reliable indicators of a child's ability, as a lot will depend on the child's state of mind when completing the test or the specific skills tested. Tests can be used as an indicator of ability but the primary knowledge of a child's ability will come from the school's staff.

Formative assessment

On a day-to-day basis Class teachers will assess the abilities of a child and then compare that child to other children in the same year group. Teachers should confer with colleagues who have knowledge of the child being considered to gain a wider view.

Parents / children's perceptions

Other methods for identifying talented children include parent nomination. Parents see their children perform a wider variety of tasks than a teacher does, therefore there may be abilities that a child has that the school are unaware of. The school will give parents the opportunity to pass on information regarding their child's achievements during admission and parent's evenings.

Attributes of able children

At an early age:

- Hold advanced conversations with an adult
- Work with abstract thoughts
- Have a wide general knowledge
- Become impatient
- Demonstrate a preference for complex thought
- Are extremely cautious
- Retain information and use it later
- Being or seeing themselves as more mature than their age
- Being direct to the point of infuriation to others
- Teach themselves new skills
- Have few friends within their age range
- Prefer to work with older children
- Find play limiting and don't regard it as learning

Identification of underachieving able children

Underachievement of able and talented children is identified through a variety of methods, including ongoing assessment and monitoring of tracking systems, including termly progress meetings. Where underachievement is identified, progress is monitored and actions are put into place to give all identified children the opportunity to reach their targets or full potential.

Underachieving able and talented children may be:

- Good orally
- Able to argue and justify with ease
- Poor written work, untidy with the minimum done
- May appear bored and anxious
- Restless
- Manipulative
- Ask provocative questions
- Need to know what's in it for me
- May be disorganised
- Escape into a private world
- Often unpopular
- Could be quiet and withdrawn
- Easily frustrated

Provision for able children

A significant amount of time for any able child can be spent in covering work they already know and understand. Therefore effective assessment enables children to start at a higher level and so encounter more challenging work.

Planning for able children is a part of effective differentiation and involves making sure that they are sufficiently challenged by the work set. This may occur at both the medium and short term planning stage, although the majority of extension activities will occur in short term planning. Effective challenge for more able children may be achieved by a variety of routes, both formal and informal. At the informal level, all children will work on the same activity or task but it will be made additionally challenging for more able pupils by teacher intervention asking some probing questions. For example:

- Why do you think that is the case?
- Why do you think the author chose to end the book in this way?

More formally, the more able will be asked to work on a different task or a modified version of the core task.

Extension tasks

Extension tasks can be formal or informal but it does need to be a recognised feature of planning.

The nature of the extension tasks varies, but in planning it is important to consider the types of approaches and skills we are looking to develop in the more able children. In general we look to extend those skills we require of all children whilst encouraging the more able to think more for themselves.

Extension tasks should encourage:

- Reflection
- Recognition of a range of possible answers
- Formulation of opinions
- Consideration of difficult and problematic questions
- Recognition of connection between past and present learning

More able children are not necessarily more industrious than other pupils so the extension tasks should not be in addition to existing work. The extension tasks are not a penalty and must have a clear purpose that is linked to the lessons overall learning objective and not more of the same.

Provision for talented children

At St. John's, every effort is made to provide as wide a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities as possible. Children identified as talented are actively encouraged to further develop their talents through this provision. Where the school is unable to meet the needs of identified children the school supports the child or parents in sign-posting a relevant provision. The school looks to actively encourage opportunities for children to share and celebrate their talents.

Organisational Issues

Children who have been identified by a teacher as being able or talented are entered onto the school Able and Talented Database kept in the 'inclusion' folder of the 'staff only' area. A copy of the register of those children attaining at mastery in any curriculum subject is made available to all staff. The area of ability is recorded, as is a broad outline of the provision for that child. The database is reviewed annually and the progress of each child towards targets will be evaluated termly by the subject lead and the inclusion lead. If a child is found to be falling significantly short of their potential, parents will be informed as soon as possible. The database and the children who are on it may change during the course of a child's school career.

Subject leaders will meet with the inclusion lead to consider the progress of groups of children including the more able in their subject. The subject lead will be responsible for discussing this with teachers responsible for a particular year group and also for reporting this to the governor responsible for that subject. The progress and attainment of able and talented children should therefore be part of curriculum monitoring across the school

Communication with Parents / Carers

In order to provide the best opportunities, provision and education for Able and Talented children it is vital that the school, parents and children work in partnership. At St. John's communicate and share information in the following ways:

- Parent consultation evenings.
- End of year reports

Transfer and Transition

The transfer of information regarding Able and Talented children will take place during transfer or transition meetings (mainly with the receiving High school). The Able and Talented lead will give details of; the children on the school register; their particular strengths and weaknesses and current provision at St John's.

Resources

Many schemes of work within school can be slightly modified to provide appropriate challenge to the able child. Where extra resources are required the school will purchase or make staff aware of their existence. Many free resources are available on the Internet for example:

- Ability Net www.abilitynet.org.uk
- Mensa Foundation for Gifted Children www.mensa.org.uk
- The National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) www.nace.co.uk

- Potential Plus UK <http://www.potentialplusuk.org>

Monitoring and Evaluation

Role of the Able & Talented Leader

The Able and Talented Lead will monitor the progress of children who are identified as being talented or more able children and will offer support to members of staff both in their role as class teacher or as subject leader. The co-ordinator will monitor the school register and the achievements of the children whose names are on it.

Role of all Teaching Staff:

To identify and make provision for able and talented children across the curriculum.

Role of Subject Leaders:

To inform class teachers of those children previously identified.

To monitor provision for those needs in their subject area

Role of the Governing Body

To ensure that the needs of all children in all subject areas are being met through best provision and to hold to account as a critical friend the subject lead.

To ensure that able and talented children make progress in their particular area of strength

Role of the Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is being implemented, and that it is updated as necessary

P. Rayner

'A Rising Tide Raises All Ships'

'If you are willing to deal effectively with the needs of able pupils you will raise the achievement of all pupils'

M. Tomlinson (1995)