



Oaklands School

Gifted, Talented and More Able Policy

Main School and EYFS

Introduction

Oaklands School believes in providing the best possible provision for pupils of all abilities to help them become independent, fulfilled, lifelong learners. A key feature of our school aims and values is that we wish to create a culture of achievement. We believe that all children are entitled to make the greatest progress possible.

We believe that any special abilities, talents or potential should be identified as early as possible and be developed during the children's time at this school. At Oaklands School, the terms are distinguished as follows:

- 'Gifted' refers to a child who is achieving a level well above the average in comparison to their peers in an academic subject/area of the curriculum
- 'Talented' refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields, typically those that call for performance skills, such as sport or music or art
- 'More able' refers to a child who shows greater progress/ aptitude to a particular subject/ topic within a subject, continuously or for a period of time.

The school encourages teachers to identify gifted/talented and more able pupils through ability rather than solely on achievement, so that underachievers are also among those identified. We recognise that these pupils who are gifted/talented/more able do not always show their ability; they may be hidden or remain as potential. We also believe that some pupils, for a certain period of time, will be achieving above the average of their peers in a specific subject and should be given the opportunity to extend their ability, by further differentiated activities, beyond the classroom situation. These pupils will be identified as more able.

Provision for gifted, talented and more able children is most effective when it:

- is treated as a whole-school issue
- promotes inclusion and equality of learning
- has a focus on achievement, not just on attainment
- has effective and progressive planning for gifted/talented and more able children firmly embedded as an integral part of the school's planning formats
- offers personalised learning opportunities
- places thinking skills and deep learning at the core of the curriculum
- encourages independence and self-assessment
- offers extension in depth and enrichment in breadth
- is monitored effectively at school and class levels
- celebrates the excitement of excellence

We acknowledge that making good provision for gifted, talented and more able pupils is often about challenging ourselves – our beliefs about what pupils can achieve and aspire to – and our confidence in being able to help them to fulfil their potential.

Aims

In relation to this policy our aims are to:

- employ as wide a variety of methods of recognition of potential as possible
- ensure that all staff can successfully identify gifted, talented and more able children
- support the abilities, personal qualities and talents of all children
- enable such children to develop to their full potential by providing an education which is appropriate to their abilities and needs
- offer these children opportunities to generate their own learning
- ensure that we challenge, develop and extend the children's thinking skills through differentiated, extended and enriched learning activities, including higher order thinking and questioning skills
- encourage all such children to think and work independently
- encourage all such children to self-assess and reflect on their own learning and achievement
- develop the specific skills or talents of each child
- be concerned not only for children's academic development, but also for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- involve and encourage parents in meeting the needs of their gifted, talented or more able children
- stimulate children through extra-curricular activities and curriculum enrichment
- support our teachers to:
 - promote excellence while structuring effectively for all pupils
 - incorporate the highest possible expectations for all pupils in all learning situations
 - value and build upon prior learning
 - value the qualities, gifts and talents of all learners
 - promote the social and emotional skills of all learners
 - use systematic encouragement and specific praise
 - include opportunities for demonstrating, developing and celebrating high levels of aptitude and ability
 - encourage risk taking, by both the children and themselves
 - offer scope for intellectual initiatives
 - provide quality assessment for learning and focused feedback
 - accelerate and expand learning whenever appropriate
 - open doors to learning beyond the classroom
 - encourage pupils to experiment and speculate
 - encourage pupils to aim high, now and in their future
 - plan lessons from the 'top' down, to ensure opportunities for all pupils to aim higher and progress as it is imperative that no child's learning is 'capped'/stopped

Identification of Gifted, Talented and More Able Children

The most effective form of identification is classroom provision that offers opportunities for all forms of ability to be demonstrated. To be inclusive, the process of identification should uncover pupils with potential, as well as those already performing at a high level. The school aims to link identification to provision: a variety of teaching and learning approaches are necessary to ensure that pupils have a clear opportunity to demonstrate learning strengths.

Identification will be through a balance of different approaches/strategies. A Gifted, Talented and More Able child register will be drawn up using the following kinds of evidence:

- Teacher nominations based on relevant assessment profiles and assessments/observations in lessons.
- Feedback from identification tests such as InCAS, subject end of topic tests, reading tests and pieces of unaided creative writing. (See Assessment Policy for further details).

- National Curriculum attainment progress records (e.g. reading tests, and dance, music and sports accreditation and assessment sheets).
- Parent consultation – teachers discuss the children’s progress with parents at consultation evenings and through reports written during the year.

The identification process is ongoing and begins when each child joins our school. Children who attend our Lower Kindergarten and Upper Kindergarten classes have comprehensive reports written about them, which include any specific aptitude in a particular area.

Children in Reception classes are assessed using the Foundation Stage profile format. This gives information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We discuss each child’s Foundation Stage profile when planning for individual needs.

Gifted children in English and Humanities are identified when they:

- demonstrate relatively high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation
- produce written work of a high standard
- use research skills more effectively to synthesise information
- enjoy reading, and respond to a range of tests at a more advanced level
- use wider vocabulary and enjoy working with words
- see issues from a broader range of perspectives
- use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion
- display consistent creativity in their work

Gifted children in Mathematics are identified when they;

- explore a broader range of strategies for solving a problem, and are able to select an appropriate method to reach a final solution
- 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
- are able to identify patterns and relationships in number sequences etc.

In addition, the gifted/talented/more able pupil may:

- finish his/her work and extension work quickly and accurately
- be able to complete his/her work and extension work but shows no interest in doing so
- be interested in things which are normally associated with an older child
- communicate well with adults, often better than with their own peer group
- have a wide range of interests, some of which may be almost obsessions
- demonstrate exceptional insight or perception
- enjoy the order and logic of things
- have a good memory, enabling access to wide general knowledge
- be sensitive and aware
- have strong views and opinions on what is fair or right
- have an original and lively imagination, often allied to a similar sense of humour
- be disruptive if not occupied or stretched
- be low in personal organisation
- be ‘gifted’ orally, but not in written work (applies particularly to boys)
- be an exceptional reader
- be very articulate or verbally fluent for their age

- give quick verbal responses (which can appear cheeky)
- have a wide general knowledge
- learn quickly
- show unusual and original responses to problem-solving activities
- prefer verbal to written activities
- be logical
- be self-taught in his/her own interest areas
- focus on his/her own interests rather than on what is being taught
- be socially adept
- appear arrogant or socially inept
- be easily bored by what they perceive as routine tasks
- show a strong sense of leadership
- not necessarily appear to be well-behaved or well-liked by others.

Oaklands School uses the following criteria to assist us in understanding the nature of a gifted child:

Bright Child

Knows the answers
Is interested
Has good ideas
Works hard
Answers the questions
Top group
Listens with interest
Learns with ease
Enjoys peers
Grasps the meaning
Completes assignments
Is receptive
Copies accurately
Enjoys school
Absorbs information
Technician
Good memorizer
Pleased with own learning

Gifted Child

Asks the questions
Is highly curious
Has wild silly ideas
Plays around yet tests well
Discusses in detail, elaborates
Beyond the group
Shows strong feelings/interest
Already knows
Prefers adults
Draws references
Initiates projects
Is intense
Creates new design
Enjoys learning
Manipulates information
Inventor
Good guesser
Is highly self-critical

Talented children in non-academic subjects are identified when they demonstrate some/all of the following general abilities:

- can develop original material from a stimulus
- are focused and committed to achieve
- grasps new skills/ideas or abstract concepts quickly
- exhibit creativity and spontaneity whilst solving problems or developing ideas
- have a strong desire to create in visual form
- show a passionate interest in the world of Art and Design/Music/Sport and Dance
- understand that ideas and meanings in their own and others work can be interpreted in different ways
- think and express themselves in creative and original ideas
- push the boundaries of normal processes (the test ideas and/or solve problems relating to issues).

In Sport/Dance the talented child may also:

- demonstrate excellent visual spatial awareness
- make new connections and synthesise ideas independently and collaboratively (dance)
- demonstrate a specific acquisition of a skill level in a practical task significantly above their peer
- be able to extend a task without teacher direction.

In Art the talented child may also:

- use materials, tasks and techniques skillfully and learn new approaches easily
- combine knowledge gained outside of Art with learnt techniques to express ideas
- be able to critically evaluate visual work and other information
- exploit the characteristics of materials and processes
- be able to visualise and explain what a finished product may look like.

In Music the talented child may also:

- learn and retain new tunes quickly and have an innate sense of the key structure and intonation (pitch)
- be able to keep a steady pace regardless of what happens around them, can repeat back more complex or longer rhythm patterns and displays a distinct sense of internal rhythm
- be able to listen for sustained periods of time, is able to discern textures within a piece of music and can recognise quickly instruments and themes (analytical listening)

Procedure and Provision

- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator communicates with each class/specialist teacher at the beginning of each term regarding the identification of any gifted/talented or more able children.
- When a gifted/talented/more able child is identified by a class/specialist teacher, a Gifted/Talented/More Able Identification form should be completed by the appropriate teacher and passed to the Gifted and Talented Coordinator.
- The child's name will then be entered in the Gifted/Talented/More Able Register, which will be kept by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator. The Headmistress and SENDCo receive copies of the updated register each term.
- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will liaise with the relevant Subject Coordinator and specialist/class teacher to identify how further differentiated work/new targets/variety of learning or working opportunities within the classroom will extend the child.
- The relevant class/specialist teacher should ensure that the Identification Form contains details of the strategies/input/differentiated challenges in place in the classroom for these gifted/talented/more able children.
- The Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Key Stage Coordinators and Subject Coordinators will monitor the input provided to the children to ensure the needs of these children are being met within the curriculum.
- Children on the register may also attend specific 'out of the classroom' extension/enrichment groups to develop their ability such as Creative writing, Mathmania, Art Club, Reading, Singing and Sports clubs. The school will endeavor to establish clubs/groups in the areas/activities in which the our gifted/talented/more able children have been identified.
- Parents will be informed about the provision/extension arrangements for their child. They will be kept informed about their child's progress at parents' evenings and via the schools reports structure.

Provision for Gifted, Talented and More Able children may involve focused teaching, whereby specific, planned time is used by the class teacher, specialist teacher or support staff to work with the child.

Withdrawal across year groups may be appropriate when a nominated group of children are taken out of their natural classroom to work with a teacher or other adult for a specified activity/number of sessions.

Teaching and learning styles

To ensure a consistent focus on the promotion of high standards, the School:

- Promotes a strong achievement culture.
- Supports a whole-school approach to assessment and monitoring.
- Supports subject coordinators and key stage coordinators in the identification and purchasing of resources that support the achievement of high standards.
- Looks at the design and accessibility to the curriculum of the G & T/More Able learners, so that they can develop the skills required to attain high standards.

Our teachers plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all the children. We give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do. Class teaching that responds to the needs of gifted, talented and more able children may involve strategies such as:

- Challenge – providing activities and experiences which engage interest and stimulate thought and action at a high level; setting children to work at more complex tasks, which combine objectives or require them to apply objectives in less familiar contents with/without support/input from a member of staff.
- Setting children more complex tasks that combine objectives or require them to apply objectives in less familiar contexts with/without support from a member of staff.
- Enrichment – adding breadth and range to a child's attainment and progress through activities and experiences which consolidate and widen the child's knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Extension – providing opportunities for children to increase the depth of their knowledge, skills and understanding, by selling an individual activity with a common classroom theme.
- Acceleration – allowing children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning: in some cases, allowing for acceleration by using objectives from those outlined in later years.
- Setting more demanding criteria for learning outcomes and for assessing these individually or/and in a small group.
- Specialist teaching – providing teaching that utilises the particular skills and expertise of individual teachers.
- Team teaching – team-based approaches in a year group, or on the whole school, which enable the skills or enthusiasms of particular teachers to be made more widely available to gifted/talented and more able children.
- Differentiation – modifying the learning experiences of gifted and talented children so as to promote the opportunities for them to engage primarily in higher-order thinking.
- Out-of-class activities – these offer talented achievers the opportunity to further extend their learning through:
 - Extra Curricular Clubs (school based and non-school based)
 - Music or sports practice, performance and competition opportunities
 - Special events e.g. residential visits
 - Community projects
 - Instrumental Music lessons in piano, recorder or violin
 - A range of educational visits which enhance the curriculum
 - Visits by experts to the School e.g. Zoolab, Shakespeare for Kids
- Homework – learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in class. This offers teachers the opportunity to set work at the level of individual children, and to extend the gifted, talented and more able child with additional more challenging 'open-ended questions'.

Roles and Responsibilities

The G & T Coordinator, with reference to both the G & T/More Able policy and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy organises the provision and practice within the School for gifted, talented and more able children. The role includes:

- Supporting staff in the identification of and setting up of provision for gifted, talented and more able children.
- Collating and monitoring the register of gifted, talented and more able children.
- Monitoring teacher's planning to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken across all curriculum areas by the higher achievers within the classroom.
- Regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for these particular children in collaboration with SENDCo, Headmistress, SLT and Key Stage Coordinators.
- Monitoring their progress through half termly discussions with teachers.
- Providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies.
- Liaising with parents on related issues when required.
- Promoting the School's agreed policy and practice with regard to the teaching and learning provision for gifted, talented and more able children.
- Auditing the quality of provision, writing action plans for school improvement, and monitoring and evaluating progress with such action plans, in partnership with the Headmistress and Senior Leadership Team.

The Subject Coordinators or Head of Early Years will endeavour to locate suitable material/tasks for these children which should be passed to the appropriate class teacher or specialist teacher.

The class/specialist teachers and key workers will:

- Fulfil their role in the identification of gifted, talented and more able children.
- Deploy the agreed professional approaches to the development of gifted, talented and more able children.
- Ensure that the parents of these children have ample opportunity to contribute to, and receive feedback about, the assessments of their children's progress.
- Seek the advice and guidance of subject coordinators or Head of Early Years when planning, evaluating and assessing their year group Scheme of Work.

Tracking Pupils' Progress

Tracking pupils' progress is seen as part of a whole-school approach to ensuring the highest standards for all learners, including the gifted, talented and more able. The principles underpinning effective tracking of gifted, talented and more able learners include:

- Staff working collaboratively, sharing and using information about pupils' progress so that identification of pupil's under-performance is early, rapid and accurate.
- Data collected and shared with the pupils and all staff involved in teaching the pupils; pupils' achievements are benchmarked against national data.
- Pupils having regular opportunities to discuss their progress in terms of future targets.
- Informing parents/carers, and involving them in supporting their children's achievements.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The Headmistress, in liaison with the G & T Co-ordinator, Senior Leadership Team and SENDCo monitors the School provision for gifted, talented and more able pupils. The team support the classroom/specialist teachers/key workers to help these pupils reach their full potential.

The G & T Coordinator provides feedback to the Senior Leadership Team on an annual basis. This monitoring may include feedback from parents and children, as well as regular classroom observations of teaching and learning and termly evaluations of children's written work.