

Dorset Education Partnership



Gifted & Talented Policy

Policy first adopted: June 2014.....
To be reviewed 3 yearly
Reviewed

FERNDOWN UPPER SCHOOL GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

RATIONALE

We believe in the development of the whole child, and that every individual should have the opportunity to develop and achieve to their full potential. As a comprehensive school we believe that the able child needs just as much support, guidance and encouragement as the less able.

We aim to educate our gifted and talented pupils to the highest possible standards to nurture their ability, to stimulate their desire for learning and to provide appropriate challenges.

The aim of the Gifted and Talented Policy is to establish good practice and strategies for the teaching of Gifted and Talented for the identification of very able children so the needs of these pupils can be met, their progress can be monitored and strategies can be implemented to extend them.

By identifying pupils and demanding higher-level responses, their performance and the expectations of others will improve, thus raising achievement across the school. Learning should be both challenging and achievable, improving self-esteem and encouraging pupils to develop their talents to become self confident, independent learners.

AIMS

To provide a consistent approach across the whole school towards identified pupils, monitoring their progress, giving appropriate intervention, extending and enriching the Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 curriculum.

ETHOS

For all pupils to fulfil their potential there needs to be an ethos of motivation and achievement. In such an atmosphere, Gifted and Talented pupils are able to flourish.

We aim to create a positive climate or 'ethos' in which higher ability pupils can thrive and learn happily alongside their peers, where teachers feel confident in working together in partnership with the pupils and their parents to meet their needs.

We aim to ensure that:-

All pupils

1. Have a secure and happy environment where they feel happy to display ability and take risks.
2. Have a teacher who expects excellence not just competence.
3. Experience challenge, sometimes to the point of finding work difficult.
4. Are given opportunities for discussion and debate.
5. Have access to a range of learning styles.
6. Are given appropriate praise and set appropriate targets.

7. Know they can ask searching questions and will be given a considered response.
8. Know that 'having a go' is more important than getting it right.
9. Are recognised as individuals with strengths and weaknesses.
10. Have challenging targets for achievement, which are regularly received.

As staff we aim to:-

- Celebrate success
- Value achievement
- Encourage risk taking
- Combat negative peer pressure
- Challenge prejudice and negative stereo-typing
- Have high expectations of all
- Provide appropriate role models
- Raise aspirations
- Provide opportunities for recognising and encouraging a wide range of gifts and talents
- Acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all
- Provide opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility
- Encourage personal responsibility
- Provide opportunities for professional development
- Promote tolerance
- Respond to the social and emotional needs of all
- Provide pastoral support
- Set challenging targets for students which are regularly monitored and reviewed.

DEFINITION

Whilst we recognise there are students with above average ability and achievements, gifted and talented students are those who have exceptional skills or qualities in particular areas.

A gifted pupil is one who is in the top 5-10% of the pupil population. (DfES definition). 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 is in the top 5-10% of those with a domain specific ability in a non-academic area:

- Physical talent
- Visual/performing abilities
- Mechanical ingenuity
- Creativity

These would constitute 5% of the year group.

Within these definition categories it is helpful to recognise that Gifted and Talented students could fall into these categories:

- Openly able, ie enjoy their talent and excel in all they do.
- Concealed able, ie under-achievers who fade into and hide in their peer group.
- Rebellious able, ie disruptive and under-achiever with a range of behavioural problems.
- Creative able ie "Odd balls", often with unusual divergent thought patterns which can make them intense and abrasive.
- Talented able, ie intellectually able but with a particular talent in one area.

(NAGC)

We recognise ability and achievement are not always the same and we aim to ensure that we identify the Gifted and Talented underachiever.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for the provision of identified pupils is within the remit of all staff. Schemes of Work should make explicit how the needs of the Gifted and Talented students are to be met.

The responsibility for Gifted and Talented is now part of a Senior Leader's role, in the Senior Leadership team.

MENTORING AND PASTORAL CARE

We recognise that gifted and talented pupils may have particular needs, and care will be taken to ensure that they receive appropriate pastoral support.

IDENTIFICATION

To identify Gifted and Talented students we will employ a range of methods at regular points throughout their school career. We will make use of hard data and qualitative data and there will be a whole school approach in the identification of the cohort which will be identified early and reviewed regularly.

The identification of Gifted and Talented students comes from the successful amalgamation of evidence from a wide variety of sources. These include:

- CAT
- Self nomination
- Teacher observations
- Parental observations
- Peer-group nomination
- Evidence from pupil's work
- Pupil's own interests
- Tests (norm, standardised and criterion referenced)
- National Curriculum tests
- Baseline tests
- Evidence from out of school activities
- Feeder schools information
- Monitoring and report procedures in Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13
- FFT D data
- AV point scores at GCSE
- ALPS data

RESPONSIBILITY/IDENTIFICATION

Working with the Senior Leader responsible for Gifted and Talented, subject staff, tutors, the Assistant Head of House and the Head of House should ensure that the Gifted and Talented cohort for their year is identified, reviewed regularly and appropriate provision made each year. Heads of Faculties should ensure that subject staff identify regularly and review performance of the Gifted and Talent students in their groups and ensure appropriate progress is being made.

The national advice is that a CAT score of 129 and above is a sound bench mark for identifying gifted students.

We would expect the gifted student to be achieving a level 7 and 8 at the end of KST 3 and for identification at KST 5 we would expect students to have gained 52 points or more on average at GCSE.

We would expect the talented student in PE to be playing their sport at County level or achieving a skill at a high level for their age. In Music students who have achieved a high level of technical ability and musicianship for their age. In Drama, students whose GCSE grades would be A to A* and similarly in Art.

ABILITY

What do we know about ability?

- Ability is multi-dimensional and only some aspects of it can be measured.
- Ability is a mix of inherited predispositions colliding with environmental, personality and contextual favours.
- Ability is developmental and what is seen as high ability in childhood differs from notions of adult excellence.
- Ability is only developed if it is nurtured through opportunity and support.

The notion that intelligence is fixed and given at birth is now dead in the water. We must recognise multiple intelligences in our teaching. Students need to have the opportunities in place to allow predispositions to develop.

DIFFERENT FORMS OF INTELLIGENCE

The child of high academic ability may be identified by intelligence tests. However, he or she may be gifted in areas in which intelligence tests are poor predictors. He or she may fall into one of the following categories:-

1. High potential – underachievers with high IQ.
2. Specific achievement – children with an isolated intellectual interest.
3. Spatial/mechanical ability – children with outstanding awareness and mechanical understanding, who may not write well.
4. Talent – children with high levels of accomplishment in art, music, drama, sport etc.
5. Exceptional ability – academic attainments match high ability and these children are generally recognised as gifted.

They might have one or several of the following;

- Musical intelligence
- Logical mathematical intelligence
- Spatial intelligence
- Linguistic intelligence
- Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence
- Interpersonal intelligence
- Intrapersonal intelligence

(Gardener 1983)

CHECKLIST

The appendix contains a checklist of some of the more unusual characteristics that able pupils can portray. It is a starting point to focus attention on the child as a complex individual. It is wrong to assume that a gifted pupil is automatically well motivated and easily recognisable. Some pupils of high ability mask their ability by day-dreaming, aggression, placid behaviour patterns and a desire to conform. The Gifted and Talented student will not demonstrate all of these characteristics.

Appendix 1: Checklist for identifying able pupils (sample)

1	Learns easily	
2	Original, imaginative, creative	
3	Persistent, resourceful, self directed	
4	Inquisitive, sceptical	
5	Informed in unusual areas often beyond their years	
6	Artistic	
7	Outstanding vocabulary, verbally fluent	
8	Musical	
9	Independent worker, shows or takes the initiative	
10	Good judgement, logical	
11	Versatile, many interests	
12	Shows unusual insights	
13	Shows high level of sensitivity, empathy	
14	Has excellent	
15	Exhibits unusually extroverted or introverted behaviour within a group	
16	Unusually high motivation and self-expression	
17	Speed and agility of thought and preference for verbal rather than written expression	
18	Show leadership qualities	
19	Socially adept	
20	Asks lots of intellectual questions and learns more quickly than others	
21	Has a very retentive memory	
22	Unusual powers of concentration on subjects of interest	
23	Has wide general knowledge and interest in the world	
24	Enjoys problem solving, often missing out the intermediate stages in an argument.	
25	Sets high standards and is a perfectionist.	
26	Prefers to spend time with older students and adults enjoying their more mature activities	
27	Good powers of reasoning. Makes unusual connections.	
28	High level of literacy (interested in words early, early reader, good use of grammar)	
29	Sharp observation	
30	Can be easily bored. Impatience with routine work	

Behavioural indicators

A child may fulfil many of the criteria of the characteristics of giftedness, yet not perform well at school. As well as poor written work, a gifted child can often appear lazy and lethargic or day dream and appear inattentive. He or she may spend a great deal of time decorating exercise books etc. Gifted children may clown around and disrupt lessons, or be unco-operative, difficult to motivate and critical of his or her teachers and of other children in the class.

Poor Co-ordination

High ability children with problem-solving capability often have poor hand-eye co-ordination. There are frequent problems with the kind of child who is very quick at logical applications and problem-solving techniques, but whose skill at handwriting is affected to the point where writing appears difficult. The reasons for this appear to be related to brain structure, rather than environmental influence. Such children may be very quick to learn spatial awareness; they may have excellent memory for locations, shapes, concepts and technological explanations or principles. They are likely to show all these characteristics at a pre-school age. They may also be very quick to pick up oral vocabulary.

However, when they first go to school, they may disappoint teachers and themselves by being unable to write neatly. Their writing is frequently messy, uncoordinated and sometimes shows signs of dyslexic reversal or omission. Some such children also show signs of ambidexterity or left-handedness.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is a myth that able students will learn whatever some do not and then we and they lose out. The more flexible our approach, the more successful. We must not generalise about the Gifted and Talented because they come in all shapes and sizes.

In addressing the learning needs of Gifted and Talented students it is important that any strategy recognises these fundamental principles:-

Gifted and Talented pupils as learners – research shows:

- **They are a diverse and disparate group.**
- **No single approach to learning will suit all of them.**
- **They need to be taught skills and knowledge.**
- **Their learning needs to be planned and supported.**
- **Context is highly significant in accessing opportunities.**

The extension of identified pupils should be within the context of the whole school community, building upon links with feeder schools, and home and extending them.

There should be clear opportunities for extension of identified pupils within lessons. This extension should be through the quality and level of thinking demanded rather than simply quantity of work, and should seek to promote higher order reasoning skills (analysis, evaluation and synthesis).

High ability pupils particularly need a lesson structure and classroom organisation and management which:

- Enables intensive concentration and study.
- Allows them to work at their own pace.
- Enables them to move on after the introduction while others need repetition.
- Gives time to study in depth.
- Provides enough work especially to stretch those who complete tasks and learn quickly via planned, structured extension and enrichment tasks.
- Allows them to actively explore their environments and test beliefs and theories by their actions – sometimes difficult to manage as it feels uncontrolled and places pressure on the teachers to provide the facilities and resources and constantly answer demanding questions.

- Gives them responsibility for planning and choosing what they do within a structured framework, encouraging them to assume control of their work and demonstrate independence.

Classroom Strategies

Teachers will be made aware of the range and ability of the pupils in their classes through the showing of prior attainment data. Once identified, it is then possible to differentiate work accordingly – for those with strengths in defined ‘learning’ areas – verbal and quantitative – this may be facilitated through extension activities. For those with other strengths, other techniques are needed, for example:-

- The fostering of high expectations when they see their peers succeed.
- Provision of opportunities to succeed – through questioning techniques (second and third questions to the same pupil to follow through thinking and reasons behind answers, delaying responses to answers to allow extension and elaboration, open and closed questioning).
- Provision of a range of activities in each class for different study and thinking styles.
- Across the school subjects will be grouped according to the need of that particular department, either allowing large groups of similar abilities to work together or allowing a mix of ability to demonstrate the potential of peers.
- Use of Gifted and Talented to teach their peers.

Homework should be continuing this process and where appropriate Gifted and Talented students could be set different tasks or given a range of higher level options to choose from.

The Gifted and Talented students should be experiencing these teaching styles and learning activities in the course of their day:-

Learning Activities

- a) Open-ended tasks
- b) Creative opportunities
- c) Cognitively demanding tasks – challenge
- d) Research/enquiry learning
- e) Problem solving
- f) Thinking skills
- g) Accelerated learning (teaching techniques)
- h) Self-regulated learning
- i) Effective questioning – not solely concerned with data and recall of facts, but using speculative questions, hypothesis generating, reasoning and problem-solving questions.

Teaching Styles

- Discussion
- Varying pace in lessons, allowing time for extended tasks
- Changing context of work, including varying the audience
- Allowing differing starting points/finishing points, especially in the use of project work
- Providing a range of learning styles – developing team teaching as appropriate
- Use of IT = using variety in information processing
- Differentiated homework tasks
- Allowing pupils to pursue personal interests
- Negotiating with pupil the task and possible outcome
- Providing opportunity for individual research/study

- Use of a marking policy that encourages critical thinking

Students learn best when teachers successfully create a work-centred environment where there is unobtrusive but effective classroom management and control, so more time is spent on discussing, the content of the work rather than telling pupils what to do.

Praise/Rewards

Gifted and Talented students have just as much need for praise and reward as any other student. It is important that staff give appropriate praise and rewards which are valued by the student, eg housepoints, postcards, rewards trips etc.

Accelerate Entry

Where appropriate departments will provide courses which allow for accelerated examinations.

Master classes

Within the range of extra curricular activities offered to all students at Ferndown Upper School, there will be some provision for master classes for Gifted and Talented students. This will either be within the school, across the pyramid or external agencies.

INSET and Professional Development

Appropriate training will be arranged for all staff to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to provide high quality provision for the most able pupils. Team leaders need to address this aspect of subject specific training and may need outside providers.

Use of schedule meetings should be used to exchange ideas on good classroom practice.

All subject areas to include Gifted and Talented in their report to Governors in September each year.

Governors to include Gifted and Talented in their Annual Report to parents.

Liaison with Parents

As with all students in the school parents will be informed at regular points during the year of the progress of their son/daughter against FFT Data and potential grades. Parents of Gifted and Talented students will be informed by letter and it will be made clear that we recognise their exceptional ability and talent and appropriate provision is being made for them.

Conclusion

The Gifted and Talented Policy should ensure that Gifted and Talented students at Ferndown Upper School are able to learn and achieve at their best in an atmosphere of informed, understanding of how all students learn effectively. We are a school who values every one and who works hard to create positive beliefs in our students knowing their power to affect achievement.

SEB
February 2014