

St Mary's Bryanston Square CE Primary School

Policy For Able, Gifted And Talented Learners

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly know how far they can go" (Barry Teare)

School Mission Statement

St Mary's School serves the local community and welcomes the children who come here, whatever their background and faith. We aim to provide an education, informed by the Christian ideal, which will enable all children to fulfil their potential.

Rationale

Providing for able, gifted and talented children is part of our philosophy of inclusion. According to our equal opportunities policy, no children will be discriminated against, regardless of ability. By providing for such children and enabling them to fulfil their potential, we believe that we enrich our school community as a whole, establishing a culture of success and achievement. Providing for able, gifted and talented children provides great opportunity to be more creative with the curriculum and its delivery. It can increase motivation amongst children and staff and reduce potential behavioural problems arising from lack of challenge. Most importantly, we will be equipping our children with the skills and resources they need; our children are our future.

Target Group

Humans are complex individuals. Our practice is based upon the principle of Multiple Intelligences, which embraces a range of abilities, not just traditional academic subjects. These include: Verbal-Linguistic, Maths-Logical, Visual-Spatial, Bodily- Kinaesthetic, Musical, Inter-personal, Intra-personal and Naturalist intelligences. As a result we maintain a broad approach to this area, and have a wide-ranging register of abilities and talents - largely accounting for 40% of our intake. As we are part of the Excellence In Cities group, we are required to report on 5-10% of our school cohort to the LEA. For this, we identify those who appear on several different talents lists as "Gifted" (Government designated as being two thirds of the group) and those with significant talents in art, music, drama, dance or sport as "Talented" (government designated as being one third of the group). Clearly, there will also be occasions where we may meet and identify exceptionally able children - usually defined as being in the top 0.5-1% of the national ability range.

Identification Strategies

Initial identification is through teacher nomination, based on, for example, assessment and analysis of test scores (including SATs, Annual QCA tests and NFER verbal reasoning tests). Teachers are asked to review their class lists twice a year and there are formats (A, G&T Spotter forms) for passing information on to the coordinator at any time when particular talents are observed (such as during a class or school workshop). Some subject checklists are available for reference purposes. Further development of these will take place over the next few years. Nominations may also be received from parents or the children themselves - which will be given due consideration and attention.

Able and Talented Registers

These are held centrally, with copies for each class passed on to the class teacher. They are used to inform the selection of children for particular support/challenge activity and are reviewed twice a year regularly. Details such as eligibility for FSM, EAL stage, ethnicity, SEN COP and summer born pupils are included for monitoring purposes.

Grouping Policy

For full details, please refer to the Teaching and Learning Policy. Grouping of children will vary according to context. For English and Maths lessons, children generally work in 3 or more different ability groups, with the teacher focusing her/his support on the most able children at least once a week for each subject.

Curriculum

For the most part, well-planned differentiation is the key to supporting and extending able and talented children in the classroom context. This may be by outcome, by task, by dialogue with staff, support, pace, content or independence. For full details of these, please refer to the Teaching and Learning Policy. Differentiated homework is also set. In very exceptional circumstances, a child may be nominated for acceleration - whereby they are moved to an older year group for some or all of the time as a way of challenging them at a higher level. However this would only be done after full consideration and with parental agreement. For older children, curriculum compacting is also a strategy used - whereby children move quickly through the basic requirements of the national curriculum and then move onto activities involving a greater degree of depth and understanding - sometimes known as enrichment activities. This may often take the form of directed self-study. Some children in years 5 and 6 may have the opportunity to attend LA-run enrichment courses at Advanced Skill Centres based upon National curriculum subjects in partnership with secondary schools, colleges, universities and local industry/museums etc. There is also the opportunity for Y6 children, where appropriate, to undertake Level 6 tasks, in English, Maths and Science, which may result in a teacher assessment of level 6.

Extra curricular opportunities

We are committed to supporting a broad range of extra curricular clubs, held at lunchtimes and after school. These are open to all within the designated age group, but invitations may be targeted towards specific groups of children, which may include able/talented individuals. Day to day management of such groups is the responsibility of the clubs coordinator (admin staff). Whole school performance and workshops are also encouraged as a means of motivating children and talent spotting. Some commercial master classes are also used as a means of enriching class curriculum work beyond the classroom.

Staff roles and responsibilities

Maintenance of the register, adherence to the policy, keeping up to date with the latest research in this area, proper spending of the A, G&T budget, annual budget bidding and reporting to the governor responsible for A&T is the responsibility of the coordinator for able and talented children (sometimes known as the Responsible Teacher). However, responsibilities towards able and talented children do not rest with paperwork. All staff are responsible for ensuring that children's abilities are nurtured and enhanced. Subject coordinators are asked to support class teachers to identify children and plan appropriate activities for them.

Parental links

Opportunities for able and talented children outside school are communicated to parents wherever possible. Where a child is identified with an ability or talent in a particular area, parents are informed and encouraged to nurture this. "Able, gifted and talented" issues are a part of parent meeting discussions where appropriate and parents can also find out about our approach from the school prospectus. Where children are nominated for particular workshops or master classes, parental consent and support is sought. Parents are also encouraged to lend their support to clubs and lessons where they can offer a particular talent themselves.

Finance

Nominal funding for the provision for Able, Gifted and Talented children is allocated through the Excellence in Cities group. Specific funding within the school budget will be according to the allocation of all curriculum budgets at the start of each financial year.

Progression, Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of able children's progress is through the whole school tracking systems, based upon test achievement at the end of each year. Where progress is not made, the situation is investigated and support targeted where possible. Possible underachievers are highlighted on the register and are prioritised when considered for enrichment and study support opportunities. AG&T action plans are written annually and form part of the school improvement plan. The action plan is reviewed twice a year and progress reported to governors. Progress reports on particular AG&T projects are regularly brought to the senior management team.