



Keble Prep Policy for Gifted and Talented pupils and more able pupils

Rationale

There is no single definition of a gifted or talented child. The DfE has taken the view that a gifted child is someone who is in the top 5-10% of the population of a school. It could be taken to mean a child who is outstanding in general or has specific abilities-children who have outstanding potential and who are in advance of their peers. Of course, not all abilities are apparent early on in a child's school life, but become more apparent as he or she gets older.

We identify these pupils so that we can provide effectively for them, and so that teachers can plan appropriate work and stimuli for them. There is no single measurement with which to identify exceptionally able pupils due to individuality.

How giftedness is defined will determine the choice of programme and what the identification procedure will be. Distinguishing between a talent and a gift is a difficult thing to do. How can a talent require any less cognitive ability than a gift? For example; pupils who are talented in music may find it difficult to work with others as they tend to be compelled by their own ideas. This can be a considerable challenge because music in the classroom often emphasises group and class interaction.

All schools have a statutory duty to support able children who will then be directed towards a range of enrichment activities. Especially since evidence shows that both gifted and talented pupils can suffer from underachievement and intellectual frustration which can manifest in various, often adverse ways. Where the educational provision is the same for all students, it is inevitable that the learning needs of certain students will not be met, and that some students will be hindered in achieving their full potential.

In our school we provide a broad and balanced education, which gives to every child continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account.

This policy outlines the school's practice and procedures relating to the support of gifted and talented pupils.

Definition

There are many things at Keble Prep. School that are already being done to raise achievement throughout the school: enrichment activities, trips, visitors to the school, individual teaching approaches, clubs and activities.

Gifted and talented pupils are not a homogeneous group and a broad range of assessment tools and identification methods are used in the identification process.

The following areas may be identified as being the main areas of ability. Following Dfes guidelines, category A includes gifted pupils and B to E pupils who are talented. We should also seek to identify pupils who will fit into these categories in the future and who are not fulfilling their potential.

- A. Intellectual (English, Mathematics and Science)
- B. Artistic and Creative (Art, Music, Drama)

- C. Practical (Mechanical ingenuity)
- D. Physical (PE, Sports, Dance)
- E. Social (Personal, leadership qualities)
- F. A pupil who could be recognised as gifted or talented but who is presently not realising his full potential.

Differentiating between able pupils

There is a temptation to regard able pupils as being a coherent and agreeable group of identical people. In the case of the able the ‘good’ and the ‘bad’ can be found. The following brief descriptions are aimed at distinguishing the different types of able pupils.

The Willing

This pupil is a joy who tirelessly wants to do the right thing-remind you what you were talking about in class when you forget. They can at times be demanding because of their very willingness and enthusiasm.

The Biddable

This is a pupil who is willing to carry out orders from another without protest or one who is too acquiescence to authority.

The Invisible

An able pupil may want to remain unseen to all forms of identification. They may be clever enough to remain invisible to our systems. They may have many talents and abilities but may value them as their concerns and not ours.

The Able Achiever

The able achiever should never be taken for granted. They should be challenged as all children should be. One sure way of finding the most able mathematician in the class is to ask the class. We should never forget that as wonderful as it is to work with these children, we should always see the pupil first as a complete individual.

The Able Underachiever.

Underachievement is difficult to define as there are many perspectives involved in making a judgement about an individual. Simply put, an able underachiever is likely to be a pupil who is failing to achieve reasonable expectations over a period of time, scoring high but producing low performance. Research suggests that:

- Praise can go a long way.
- Give students assignments and tasks that build on their strengths, are engaging and provide a challenge that encourages higher level thinking.
- Don't assume gifted means organised, they may need help to get their thoughts into some manageable form.
- Use student-to-student or self evaluation in classroom tasks.

Identification Strategies

The DfE requires schools to identify the most able 5-10% of pupils in each year group. The term 'gifted' refers to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects such as Mathematics or History. 'Talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities, such as in games and PE, drama or art.

The identification process utilises evidence from a variety of sources that include:

- Standardised tests for example CATS/GL Assessments
- Teacher checklists of observed characteristics and learning traits
- Discussions with pupils
- Identification by class work and assessment results
- Scrutiny of pupils' work and performance
- Significant participation and high performance in extra curricular activities
- Information from lesson observations

The use of an amalgam of evidence ensures that identified cohorts of gifted and talented people encompass pupils with general intellectual ability, subject's specific ability, and/or the ability in visual and performing arts and PE. These identified cohorts will also contain a combination of people who achieve 'at a level significantly in advance of the average for their year group in the school' or who have the ability to do so but who are currently under achieving.

Creating a learning environment

Research shows that positive enhancement of all kinds of learning and achievement flows from classroom climates that have:

- High expectations of pupils .
- Professional understanding where the encouragement of pupils is normal behaviour.

A climate where pupils feel free to explore and express opinions, to examine alternative positions on controversial topics

How can this be achieved?

- Provide well-planned activities
- Show respect for each student
- Be flexible
- Accept and celebrate differences

- Exhibit a positive attitude
- Acknowledge every response or contribution during a lesson
- Allow students to be active participants
- Create experiences that will ensure success at least part of the time for each pupil
- Use a wide variety of teaching methods.

Example for purposes of illustration: Identifying gifted pupils in Mathematics

Pupils show their special talents in mathematics in a range of ways and at varying points in their development. People who are gifted in mathematics are likely to:

- Learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly
- Work systematically and accurately
- Be more analytical
- Think logically and see mathematical relationships
- Make connections between the concepts they have learnt
- Identify patterns easily
- Apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts
- Communicate their reasoning and justify their methods
- Ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics
- Take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems
- Sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persistent seeking solutions
- Being more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry.

Some pupils who are gifted in Mathematics perform at levels unusually advanced for their age. For example: a seven year old may work confidently with the mathematics described at an average standard in the National Curriculum and begin to work successfully with other concepts described at a much higher level. Other pupils with exceptional mathematical ability may not demonstrate it in this way. For example, pupils may have high levels of mathematical reasoning but be unable to communicate their ideas well orally or in writing. Sometimes gifted pupils reject obvious methods and answers as too easy and opt for something more obscure. In these cases formal testing alone is insufficient as a basis for identification. It is often helpful for teachers to provide enrichment and extension activities and to observe pupil responses to challenging activities. However, these pupils need to be able to keep up with their ordinary work and teachers need to successfully accommodate them.

When working with gifted pupils teachers should aim to:

- Lay strong foundations

- Develop deeper understanding
- Cultivate a willingness to reflect on the connections between aspects of mathematics
- Foster a desire to understand in full the mathematical concepts studied and the reasons why particular methods are correct
- Develop a higher level of thinking skills.

The programme does not need to involve extensive additional provision, but it should provide a mixture of challenge and encouragement. At all times it is important to remember that gifted pupils need time to relax and grow, as well as opportunities to be stimulated and challenged.

All schools should have a coherent programme for their mathematically most able pupils. The challenge is to provide a mathematics programme that nurtures pupils' special talents while both extending and motivating them. It should provide a mixture of challenge and encouragement.

Aims

The aim of education for gifted and talented pupils is to ensure that those students so identified have every opportunity to achieve their full potential. It will ensure that there is an improvement in attainment levels.

Teacher Attitudes

The methods and approaches used when teaching the able pupil are themselves the basis for excellent teaching. A key factor is that the able child is recognised and respected as having an absolute right to learn and achieve to the fullest extent possible.

It should be remembered that not all people in society enjoy the presence of the gifted and talented. What, however, should never be compromised on is the professional need to teach all children to the ability of the child and not the ability of the teacher.

Managing success and failure

If a pupil does well they should recognise this. If things could be improved on then it is good for a pupil to recognise that improvements and enhancements to knowledge and skills can be attempted. We all have our own comfort levels about taking risks and the potential for mistakes. For the able pupil, mistakes are serious matters. The pressure created by a fear of mistakes will lower the performance of an individual.

Being cautious and careful is often seen as the safest way to behave in most circumstances. Many are often happy to receive learning passively rather than embrace the responsibility for their learning that would result from being an active learner who learns from their mistakes.

As with many things, the pupil needs to strike a balance both for themselves and for their learning—a balance where they recognise risk but are still willing to try new things and live with the possible outcomes, even if those outcomes are sometimes challenging.