



MOST ABLE PUPILS POLICY

May 2016

MISSION STATEMENT

At St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School:

- we encourage each other to live our lives based on Gospel values;
- we acknowledge and nurture the unique gifts in every individual;
- we have a positive vision of our Faith;
- we ensure that prayer, reflection and worship form an integral part of every day;
- we recognise each person as a vital part of God's creation;
- we lay the foundations for successful, lifelong learning;
- we are at the heart of our Parish, welcoming, supporting and working in partnership with families.

Statement of Intention

We believe at St John's Catholic Primary School that we should provide for pupils of all abilities. Pupils deserve an education that challenges and motivates them to achieve their full potential and become independent learners. We endeavour to help pupils develop their skills and abilities intellectually, physically, artistically and creatively.

All pupils should be given opportunities to achieve the outcomes that are key to well-being in childhood and later life. All pupils should be entitled to opportunities, which enable them to maximise their potential, achieve success in their work and relationships and encourage them to value their own and others' achievements.

The curriculum and organisation of the school must allow each pupil to learn at a pace that is appropriate for them and more able pupils should be given the opportunity to study subjects to a greater breadth and depth using their curriculum knowledge to solve problems and investigate possibilities.

This document outlines our practice for working with the most able pupils and illustrates our commitment to them. We believe that every teacher and co-ordinator has an equal responsibility for identifying and supporting these pupils.

Definitions

'Most Able' pupils are those who have exceptional leadership and social skills and have exceptional abilities in one or more subjects in the statutory school curriculum.

Identification

Schools are expected to identify 5-10% of pupils as most able.

We aim to establish procedures for identifying pupils that are non-discriminatory. We also aim to identify children who have the potential to be on the register, but who are currently underachieving.

Pupils will be identified using a range of techniques:

- Analysis of information from reception assessments by the class teachers
- Analysis of formative and summative assessments by the class teachers and subject leaders
- Standardised and scaled scored tests
- Ongoing tracking assessment – tests, careful record-keeping, collation of evidence, e.g. samples of pupils' work

- Teacher observation of social and leadership skills
- Discussion with colleagues and subject leaders during staff meeting time
- Observations and advice from subject leaders
- Consultation with parents
- Information received from previous schools

Characteristics

Most able pupils are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. They are more likely than most to:

- Think quickly and accurately
- Work systematically
- Generate creative working solutions
- Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations
- Communicate their thoughts and ideas well
- Be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns
- Achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts
- Be particularly creative
- Show great sensitivity or empathy
- Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill
- Make sound judgements
- Be outstanding leaders or team members
- Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspect(s) of work
- Are able to use a high level of mastery in order to work with the curriculum objectives taught

It is important to recognise that not all highly able pupils are obvious achievers. Many actually under achieve – their potential is masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem, Special Educational Needs, lack of challenge, and low teacher/parent expectations. To enable these pupils to fulfil their potential, it is vital to give everyone in the school the opportunity to excel.

As a school, we recognise that we need to be alert to any groups of pupils who may be underachieving and to assess the potential ability of these pupils. We are also aware of the need to ensure that particular groups are not under-represented.

Planning for Provision

We aim to:

- Create an ethos where it is OK to be 'bright' and where pupils feel good about achieving excellence
- Encourage all pupils to become independent learners
- Provide a wide range of resources to accommodate the needs of able pupils
- Offer opportunities for the able pupils to work independently or with older pupils of the same ability
- Celebrate achievement

- Involve pupils in decision-making, for example as members of the school council
- Encourage pupils to carry out extra research work
- Encourage pupils to participate in out of the classroom activities
- Promote an atmosphere of inclusiveness where any negative stereotyped generalisations about gifted, more able and talented pupils are challenged
- Ensure that provision of gifted, more able and talented pupils is embedded in all aspects of school life
- Support the effective transition of gifted, more able and talented pupils to the next stage of education
- Encourage parents and carers to be aware of their role in supporting and encouraging their child's learning by recognising their child's interests and abilities, providing resources and opportunities at home and setting realistic targets.
- Promote celebration of achievements by asking parents to inform the school if their child has an out-of-school award etc.
- We use a mastery curriculum. Mastery is how a child can apply much of the curriculum as a whole in more in-depth and complex, cross-objective, multi-modal methods.

The school provides a whole range of extra-curricular activities for all pupils and will endeavour to provide activities that enable gifted and talented pupils to extend and challenge their skills.

Whole School Strategies

Whole school strategies that are currently available are:

- Individual pupil target setting in maths, reading and writing
- Study Buddies
- Differentiation by accessing the whole curriculum to the learning needs of the individual
- Enrichment and extension activities which add breadth and depth to the curriculum
- Selection to attend subject workshops at the local secondary schools
- Accelerations where appropriate
- Setting and separate pupil groups where appropriate (eg. in phonics)
- The encouragement and celebration of special abilities and individual achievements through whole school assemblies
- School productions to challenge and extend the more gifted artists, singers, dancers and actors
- Class assemblies, liturgies and services
- Enrichment weeks when the normal timetable is suspended and cross-curricular projects, which offer pupils more challenge and responsibility, are planned (eg. Olympics, Fairtrade)
- After school clubs to extend the curriculum further
- Private guitar, woodwind and brass lessons for the musically talented
- Opportunities to take part in community events
- Participation in local cluster sporting events

Parents, carers and schools working together, can significantly enhance a child's experience of education and effective partnership and will be based on the development of trust and on each partner valuing the other.

Classroom Strategies

We acknowledge the importance of establishing the prior knowledge, understanding and skills pupils have to avoid unnecessary repetition of work, which can be demotivating. We are also alert to the pupils who are very able but who are underachieving. Through effective planning, assessment, record-keeping and liaison with children's previous teachers we aim to:

- Provide problem solving and investigation activities to develop reasoning, questioning and thinking skills
- Identify appropriate objectives and have explicit gifted and talented activities identified in planning across the whole curriculum
- Encourage all pupils to become independent learners and discerning questioners by:
 - organising their own work
 - carrying out unaided tasks which stretch their capabilities
 - making choices about their work
 - developing the ability to evaluate their own work and so become self-critical
- Analyse attainment data, including performance criteria in PE and the creative arts, in order to identify those pupils who have the potential to reach high levels of performance
- Establish what the children have done previously in order to prevent repetition
- Provide challenges through high-quality tasks for enrichment and extension
- Differentiate appropriately and plan work so that there is extension material for the able children
- Set differentiated homework
- Ensure pupils achievements match their potential ability, taking into account the schools' performance data as well as information from its own pupil tracking

Monitoring

Monitoring will take place by:

- All teachers are involved in identifying able children annually as a whole school process
- All teachers will assess the progress of pupils through normal classroom practice and whole school termly assessments
- Additional monitoring is done by the SLT and individual subject coordinators, to ensure that the whole school curriculum meets the needs of the able, gifted and talented
- Lesson observations across the curriculum will ensure the correct provision for the most able pupils in our school