

CASTLESIDE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Provision for More Able and Talented Pupils

Rationale and Philosophy

In our school we recognise that all pupils are individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, gifted and talents. Within this range of individuality there are pupils who are more able intellectually than others, and pupils who are particularly talented in certain specific areas of ability.

Just as we need a policy for provision for pupils with special education needs, so we need a policy for provision for pupils at the upper end of the ability range, who have their own special needs.

We believe that every child has the right to be included in a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum; and that each pupil is entitled to have the opportunity to be involved in appropriate education which challenges, motivates and rewards them, so that they can each fulfil their own individual potential.

Definition of a More Able and Talented pupil

Each child is unique and to attempt a single definition is to generalise too widely. It is suggested that between 10% – 15% of children are considered 'more able and talented' (and 2% as Exceptionally Able [NACE/DFEE Project 1993-96]).

More able children are not necessarily good all-rounders but could be outstanding in a cluster of areas or one particular interest. The 'more able and talented' definition includes all areas of interest and involvement not just academic ability or school based learning and can include:-

- General intellectual ability
- Specific aptitude in one or more than one subject
- Creative or performing arts (inc. Art, Drama, Music etc.)
- Leadership qualities
- Advanced social skills
- Sporting Skills
- Etc.

Whilst we are aware of those children who are high achievers there are those with the potential and capabilities who are underachieving for a variety of reasons.

Identification

We identify more able and talented pupils so that we can provide effectively for them, and so that the school and teachers can appropriately plan and provide for them.

There is no single measurement with which to identify these pupils. In this school we use a combination of the following sources of information.

- Teacher observation and assessment
- Pupils showing indication of high ability and talent through

- consistent high achievement
 - testing – including (Baseline Assessment; SAT’s; Non Statutory SAT’s; Standardised Tests; World Class Tests and Activities)
 - rapid grasp of new concepts
 - recognised characteristics of ability
 - occasional glimmers of potential
- Background knowledge from parents, past teachers and appropriate specialists.

The following grid may be helpful when identifying

Pupils may appear able if they	Able pupils may be missed if they
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • speak confidently • have a good vocabulary • are mature • read easily • were born September – December • had a bright sibling • have a good general knowledge • have good motor skills • are attractive and lively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are shy and retiring • are bilingual • are immature • had little or no pre-school experience • have a summer birthday • had a slow sibling • are slow to read and/or write • have poor physical co-ordination • look scruffy and unappealing

More able and very able children in English are identified when they:

- demonstrate high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
- use research skills effectively to synthesise information;
- enjoy reading and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level;
- use a wide vocabulary and enjoy working with words;
- see issues from a range of perspectives;
- possess a creative and productive mind and use advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

More able and very able children in Mathematics are identified when they:

- explore a range of strategies for solving a problem;
- are naturally curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
- see solutions quickly without needing to try a range of options;
- look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
- work flexibly and establish their own strategies;
- enjoy manipulating numbers in a variety of ways.

Aims

To ensure that the Staff, Governors and Parents are aware that all children have particular educational needs which must be met to reach their full potential and that more able and talented pupils have:

- To face a range of learning experiences which challenge and extend their development
- The opportunity to work at higher cognitive levels
- The opportunity to develop/extend specific skills and talents

- The opportunity to experience a broader, richer curriculum
- The use of differentiated educational provision through curriculum, enrichment and extension
- Opportunities to generate their own learning
- Support and care for the whole child personally, socially and intellectually.

Monitoring

Once identified, the pupils are entered in our register of more able and talented pupils, which notes their particular abilities. This information is regularly reviewed and new targets set (I.E.P.'s) on a termly basis.

Co-ordination

We have appointed a member of staff responsible for co-ordinating the work with more able and talented pupils. Their role is to:

- Set up and maintain the register
- Monitor progress of those on the register
- Liaise with class teachers to support provision for gifted and talented pupils
- Research resources suitable for these pupils, and generally support staff in providing for more able and talented pupils
- Develop a resource base as funds allow
- Keep themselves up to date in this field

Provision

Using this policy – the school (i.e. the whole staff) is responsible for identifying more able and talented pupils and actively developing appropriate learning opportunities with a range of suitable resources to assist their progress.

Much of what is needed to assist 'more able and talented' pupils can be found in the current general school provision, however aspects need to be developed as and when appropriate to support identified group and individual needs. Organisationally we will use a mixture of settings and groupings to ensure that pupils' needs are met.

Equal Opportunities

At this school we aim to provide all pupils, regardless of ability, race, disability or gender with equal access to the curriculum, provision for the More Able and Talented and the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

The Curriculum

Access to a broad and balanced curriculum which includes curriculum enrichment and extra curricular activities is essential for the more able children if they are to have access to a range of opportunities through which they can discover and extend their particular abilities and talents.

Classroom Planning

At the heart of good classroom provision are the issues of planning and assessment. Planning for more able pupils is a part of effective differentiation and involves making sure they are sufficiently challenged by the work set. This may occur at both the medium term and short term planning stage, although the major of extension opportunities will occur in short term planning. Extension must have a clear purpose, which is linked to the lessons overall objective and not be simply 'more of the same'.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers in our school plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. We give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning by providing:

- A common activity that allows the children to respond at their own level.
- Enrichment – enrichment is the opportunity to explore more broadly. Enriching the curriculum may mean exploring an aspect of a subject that other may not cover.
- Extension – extension in the pursuit of greater depth. This may occur within each aspect of a subject as it is taught or by fast tracking through a subject to reach a higher level.
- Children meet a variety of organisational strategies as they move through the school. Each strategy supports all children in their learning, but gives due regard to the more able and very able learner.
- Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in classes. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.
- The children will also have the opportunity to experience a range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning.

Classroom Assessment

If planning, and particularly extension planning is effective then short term, diagnostic assessment is essential. The most important principal here is accrediting pupils' current levels of knowledge and understanding before starting on new modules of work.

School Organisation, Class Provisions and Pupil Grouping

Consideration must be given to organisation and provision if more able and talented pupils are to be stretched and appropriately challenged. The most significant structure from the perspective of more able pupils provision is pupil grouping. More able pupils ideally need opportunities to work both in mixed ability contexts and with others of like ability. Some of the following are/will be applied in this school as appropriate:-

- Acceleration

- Setting by ability, so that more able and talented pupils can from time to time, work together with others of similar ability; this will include working with older pupils where suitable
- Working with pupils of the same chronological age, so that they remain part of a peer group
- Withdrawal for individual support when necessary
- Special provision for exceptionally able pupils for specific teaching and mentoring
- Use of appropriate skilled specialist support

A School Climate – which encourages the More Able and Talented to achieve More Able and Talented Pupils needs to

- have a secure environment in which they feel happy to display ability and take risks
- have a teacher who expects excellence not just competence
- experience challenge, sometimes to the point of finding work difficult
- relax and have fun
- engage in exciting intellectual and debate
- have access to learning opportunities that recognise the range of learning styles
- be given appropriate praise and set appropriate targets
- know they can ask searching questions and will be given a considered response
- know that ‘having a go’ is more important than getting it right
- be recognised as an individual with strengths and weaknesses

Out of School Activities

The school offers a variety of clubs providing opportunities and experiences not available in the classroom. Children are encouraged to involve themselves in these activities which will enhance development of their interests and identified talents as well as supporting their all round personal progress. Opportunities include a range of sporting, musical, drama, homework club etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Provision for More Able and Talented Pupils is monitored as part of the whole school’s Monitoring Process on an annual basis.
- The Head Teacher, Class Teachers, Subject Co-ordinators and appropriate specialists will provide the Co-ordinator in keeping with the requirements of this policy.
- The staff, the Governing Body and the identified governor responsible for More Able and Talented Pupils will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review its contents as and when appropriate.

Parents

It is a priority of this school to try and involve parents as much as possible in their children's education, and hopefully develop a realistic view of the wide range of abilities which pupils display and the particular strengths of their own children.

When parents have been given the opportunity to be actively involved and informed of their children's ongoing achievement it is the school's policy to set realistic targets and give challenging tasks and activities in keeping with their abilities. (i.e. Short Term Targets)

In appropriate cases this will lead to children's inclusion on the More Able and Talented Register. As with all aspects of assessment and reporting it is essential that parents are made fully aware of how their child will be supported, how they can help – confidence in the teacher is essential.

In this school children on the More Able and Talented Register will have I.E.P.'s (Individual Education Plans) and they will be the basis for regular monitoring of progress and future Target Setting.

Regular liaison exists between parents and teachers (3 Parents' Evenings per year; PTA Meetings etc., etc.) to discuss pupils' abilities and strengths and to encourage appropriate ongoing development including children on the More Able and Talented Register.

Pupils

If children are to give of their best it is essential that the school is supportive of all pupils, and encourages high levels of individual performance. There is no point in repeatedly praising the very able children and isolating them from their peer group. Effective provision for very able pupils becomes even better when the child has a say in it. This is real independent learning. A programme which is planned with, their enthusiastic support, based on their ability is more likely to support and will fully extend and challenge them.