

# **Ellel St John's C E Primary School**

## **Policy for Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils**

***Living, Loving and Learning in the Light of Christ.***

### **Rationale**

At Ellel St John's School we believe that all pupils are entitled to receive the support and challenge necessary to help them to develop their full potential. The needs of able, gifted and talented pupils are acknowledged as part of our overall inclusion policy. We recognise the importance of identifying a wide range of abilities and talents, and of providing opportunities to nurture them. In addition, we are committed to developing pupils' social and emotional skills as essential elements in the development of the whole person.

Our school is a learning community in which knowledge, skills and talents are valued, recognised and celebrated. Academic achievement is a source of pride for pupils, parents and the wider community. We promote the highest standards to which all pupils can aspire. We aim to offer a secure and stimulating environment which meets the needs of individual pupils.

In our school, we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children. Children deserve an education that encourages them and motivates them to achieve their full potential. We respect the right of all children in our school, irrespective of differences in ability, to access all areas of learning, and to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development in to active and responsible adults.

Opportunities are offered to enable able, gifted and talented pupils to develop their abilities within the context of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural framework of the school. This policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as able, gifted, or talented.

### **Aims and Objectives**

In pursuing excellence and equity in the education of able or talented pupils, the school seeks to:

- Ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all our children
- Ensure that we challenge, support and extend the children through the work that we set them and promote learning tasks which are relevant, enjoyable and which extend conceptual structures, within an ethos of high expectations
- Offer children the opportunities to generate their own learning
- Encourage pupils to think and work independently
- Encourage and support the development of alternative approaches to teaching and learning that engage, extend and challenge able and talented pupils at levels appropriate to their ability.
- Encourage dialogue between parents, staff and pupils in respect of pupils' talents, abilities and needs, to help pupils achieve their potential and to be ambitious.
- Provide a supportive social, emotional, pastoral and educational environment, including the provision of opportunities for contact with similarly able or talented peers within school and the wider community.
- Monitor the progress of and evaluate the impact of developments arising from this policy
- Build on existing systems of monitoring and evaluation to track progress of these pupils.

## **Definition**

At Ellel St John's School the children placed on the register are those who;

- Are working above the higher ability group in the class, with the potential to achieve at a higher level than the majority of their peers in one or more "academic" subjects. This includes gifted children with the potential for exceptional performance (representing around 0.5% of the population nationally)
- Demonstrate a high level of ability in art, music, sport or the performing arts.

The able, gifted and talented are defined by the DfE as a cohort of between 5% and 10% of the school's population. The group is divided into the able (the academically most able) and the talented (those whose expertise lies in areas such as Drama, Music, Sport, Arts etc. (The DfE guidelines are that they should be in the proportion of twice as many Able to Talented children).

## **Identification**

All teachers are aware that no identification strategy is perfect and that children's different strengths emerge at different ages and in different circumstances. Teachers never regard a child's potential as fixed. The identification process is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school. Each child's pre-school transition document gives details of their achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents, carers and pre-school providers, which take place during pre-school visits, enable us to add further details to the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP).

A wide range of identification strategies are made use of, including:

- Teacher observation and assessment
- Formal Tests (external and national tests, optional tests, baseline assessments)
- Information from previous schools and other external sources
- Information from parents and carers
- Mentoring

Children undergo baseline assessment within the first half term of joining the reception class. This gives information about their developing skills and aptitudes across areas of learning. We use each child's baseline assessment information when planning for individual needs. Teachers also make regular assessments of each child's progress in all subjects. We compare information gained with a range of national and LEA data, in order to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress. Each teacher regularly reviews the children's progress and records this in the School Tracking System for each cohort. Teachers discuss or report on the children's progress on a termly basis.

Able and gifted 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 in discussion.

Able and gifted 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.
- demonstrate reasoning and application skills out of context

A register of able and talented pupils is kept by the AGT Coordinator and copies are held by all staff who teach children, including HLTA and PPA staff. It is seen as a fluid process and identification processes are ongoing to allow changes to the register at any point, but the register is formally reviewed by the staff in November, February and June each year.

## **Provision**

Able pupils have diverse needs and there is no one "catch-all" approach to teaching and learning. It is clear, however, that appropriate progress will not be made without structured guidance and support. Strategies adopted match pupils' education with their abilities and learning needs, rather than with their chronological age. All subject leaders take account of the needs of AGT children when formulating policy and practice.

The classroom offers a carefully structured positive atmosphere in which the contribution made by all pupils is recognised, differences acknowledged and where enthusiasm for learning is fostered. Teachers seek to provide tasks that promote problem-solving skills, allow children to work at greater depth and apply their knowledge in a range of contexts and all these opportunities are associated with clear thinking and a spirit of investigation.

Able pupils experience a mixture of enhancement, enrichment and extension activities.

Enhancement: deepening understanding of core subjects through focused group work.

Enrichment: broadening study by including elements outside of the core provision;

Extension: studying the standard curriculum at greater depth; increasing complexity and challenge – open-ended tasks and questions, deepening understanding of concepts, additional activities around basis themes.

In our school, children have the opportunity to:

- Be in a secure environment in which they feel happy to display ability and take risks
- Have a teacher who expects excellence and not just competence
- Experience challenge, sometimes to the point of finding work difficult
- Relax and have fun– in an atmosphere of mutual respect where mistakes are accepted as a route to learning.
- Engage in exciting intellectual discussion and debate
- Have access to learning opportunities that recognise a range of learning styles
- Be given praise and set appropriate targets
- Know they can ask searching questions and 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
- Enhance the curriculum outside the classroom through clubs, competitions, visits, visitors, Enrichment activities, Children's University, etc. Opportunities include a range of sporting, art and musical activities.
- Experience challenge – introducing elements of competition with older pupils or wider arena than peer group. Also competition against self is important – clear targeting.
- Tackle problem solving and investigation – to develop reasoning and thinking skills.

## **Organisational Approaches**

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:

- common activities that allow the children to respond at their own level;
- enrichment activities that broaden children's learning in particular skill or knowledge area;
- individual activities within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- opportunities for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning.
- enhancement groups which deepen understanding of core subjects and concepts in a small group setting.

To meet the needs of individual able, gifted and talented pupils, a range of strategies are adopted that include:

- Withdrawal groups
- Target setting/Mentoring
- Grouping
- Differentiation strategies
- Enrichment opportunities
- School clubs
- Discussion with parents to look at external groups for membership
- Enrichment
- Enhancement

We set targets for English and Mathematics for all pupils in every year group. We teach the children in groupings that are conducive to holistic learning. Teachers regularly review children's progress, and children move between groups as appropriate. Learning is also enriched through regular, differentiated 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 also have the opportunity to experience a range of educational visits and visitors that further enrich and develop learning.

## **Pastoral support**

Pupils who are 'more able' in one or more areas present particular challenges, including some who may feel alienated from or pressurised by their age peers and those who engage in patterns of behaviour that may hide their abilities, leading to disaffection and underachievement.

We do not assume that able pupils will automatically make appropriate progress: it depends on a range of environmental and personality factors, including supporting home, school and learning environments. We look out for those pupils who may have potential but currently underachieve. Disaffected able students are targeted and supported. Each child is an individual and some children may need more support than others. We ensure that where necessary individuals receive academic or pastoral support to overcome identified barriers to learning.

As for all other pupils, we aim to encourage and support the more able and talented through a broad based, relevant and challenging curriculum, encouraging the pursuit of excellence and celebrating the achievements of each pupil.

## **Management strategies**

At Ellel St John's Church of England Primary School, the AGT Leader works with the Headteacher to co-ordinate the provision and practice within the school for AGT children.

The co-ordinator's role includes:

- ensuring that the AGT register is updated every term;
- monitoring to ensure that there is suitable provision for AGT children across all curriculum areas;
- regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for AGT children;
- monitoring the progress of AGT children through discussions with teachers;
- supporting staff in the identification of AGT children;
- providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies for AGT children;
- liaising with parents, governors and LEA officers on issues related to AGT children.
- consultation with senior leadership, staff and governors
- annual reviews of policy
- development of INSET for colleagues
- provision of resources
- keeping up to date with information about teaching gifted, able and talented pupils and disseminating such information to colleagues
- development links with organisations who support gifted, able and talented pupils

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The co-ordinator for AGT provision monitors this policy annually and gives feedback to the governing body. The monitoring includes feedback from parents and children, as well as regular classroom observations of teaching and learning, and evaluations of children's written work.

The co-ordinator collects samples of work, in order to demonstrate the standards that AGT children are achieving. These examples inform the process of identification of AGT children.

A range of quantitative data is available to assist in the monitoring process: the attainment of high test results, value-added analysis of assessment data by ability group, target setting, school development planning and performance management structures.

Other concrete data includes: specific planning for able pupils, evidence of effective differentiation / challenge, links with parents, other schools and innovative approaches.

Whilst more difficult to assess, it is also important to consider qualitative criteria: for example, the impact on pupil motivation, engagement with the curriculum, attitudes to learning, overall ethos, improved skills for independent learning.

Having identified useful sources of information, is used to evaluate the impact of the policy on the quality of teaching and learning and standards of achievement for the most able. The number of extra-curricular visits is not in itself a valuable criterion of success, but any subsequent impact upon pupil motivation, understanding and attainment would be.

To inform future development, consideration is given to whether there has been any negative impact for pupils not included in the cohort.

## **Role of Parents**

Partnership between schools and parents is central to all round development of our able pupils.

It is our school's responsibility to:

- Give the parents clear information about their child's abilities in school
- Draw parents into the identification process
- Inform parents of any action taken to meet their child's specific needs
- Listen carefully and take appropriate action where parents do not think that their child's needs are being met
- Inform parents and make them aware that their child's ability has been recognised and that the school is seeking to ensure an appropriate educational experience

Parents should recognise that they can support their able child by:

- Telling the school about their child's talents and abilities beyond the classroom
- Providing a suitable environment for their child to work and encouraging good study habits
- Encouraging their child to take part in worthwhile, varied out of school activities and experiences
- Being aware that their child needs a variety of skills and experiences to fulfil their potential

## **Role of the Governors**

It is the role of the Governors to:

- Ensure that this policy can be made to work
- Enable equality of opportunity for gifted, able and talented pupils
- Enable the sharing of expertise and the good practice in teaching and management of gifted, able and talented pupils
- Make sure that all relevant policies and documents refer to gifted, able and talented pupils

Our link Governor for gifted, able and talented pupils is \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Conclusion**

The success of the policy will impact on the school's ethos. At Ellel St John's School we want our pupils to believe it is "cool to be clever" and to strive to achieve their full potential. We want our staff to feel confident in offering appropriate levels of challenge for our most able. We will measure success by both academic performance and development in the confidence and independence of our learners.

## **Review**

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

GTyson (AGT Co-ordinator)  
Autumn Term 2022  
Reviewed Autumn 2023