



Gifted and Talented Policy

This policy applies to all pupils and staff of Abbot's Hill, including EYFS.

This policy links into the general school aims and philosophy and should be read in conjunction with the English as an Additional Language Policy, Equal Access Policy, and the SEND Policy. At Abbot's Hill we recognise pupils as individuals with unique strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents and we create opportunities for all abilities to nurture and flourish.

The Gifted and Talented initiative is an integral part of the school's improvement plan, to challenge and extend the thinking of all its pupils via a broad and balanced curriculum.

In line with current research, this term is not intended to be seen as a mark of innate ability or an indication of "potential" which separates and or limits the possible learning of all. We should recognise that "being smart is as much a matter of determination and self-discipline as it is of intellect" (Guy Claxton 2008). It is for this reason that our Gifted and Talented register is shared by teachers and not to parents and pupils. All pupils at Abbot's Hill are entitled to an education that appropriately challenges them.

Aims

In catering for able pupils, the school aims to achieve

- An entitlement to an appropriately challenging education
- A suitably differentiated and challenging curriculum
- Distinct and discernibly different personalised learning opportunities (e.g. for able pupils to work at higher cognitive levels)
- Opportunities to develop specific skills or talents
- Strategies to heighten motivation and raise aspirations to fulfil potential
- Mentoring of pupils who have not been identified as Gifted and Talented by any teachers but have high CAT scores
- Support for the emotional well-being of the child

Definition

Gifted pupils are defined as those who are achieving at a level well above their peers in the statutory school curriculum other than in the 'Creative and Performing Arts'.

Talented pupils are defined as those as having distinct abilities in PE, music, art and design, drama and dance.

There are those pupils who have exceptional abilities who are Gifted or Talented in a range of subjects. We also have pupils that have all round intellectual ability and specific strengths in social or leadership skills.

Identification

Learners are identified as Gifted or Talented by a variety of methods, both quantitative and qualitative.

- Teacher nomination
- Standardised, national test and assessment scores/levels

- The register is kept updated by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator and is easily accessible to all staff as it is stored on SchoolBase within the Educational Needs section. Subject Co-ordinators and Heads of Department keep an up to date list of pupils for their subject. Enrichment and extension activities are also recorded centrally and within departments.

Identification of gifted or talented pupils who are underachieving

There may be pupils who have been identified as underachieving in a particular subject, if so, thorough investigations are conducted by the Head of Department or Subject Co-ordinator to find out why and to identify measures that need to be taken. The findings could show that a pupil is underachieving due to a specific learning difficulty or an inappropriate learning style.

Assessments are conducted to help identify those pupils who are underachieving and action points raised. Mentoring by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator may be offered as one of those strategies employed to support these pupils. The progress of all pupils is tracked and closely monitored. See appendices for a breakdown of assessments carried out throughout the school.

Organisation

The co-ordination of this work is carried out by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator together with Subject Co-ordinators for the Prep School and Heads of Department in the Senior School.

Responsibilities of these key people are to:

- Implement and evaluate the School Improvement Plan
- Monitor and evaluate provision and progress
- Identify additional needs
- Ensure clear and effective communication

Provision

In the classroom, teachers provide a stimulating learning environment, where opportunities exist to enable independent learning. The lessons are well differentiated to ensure that Gifted and

Talented learners are stimulated and stretched by:

- Developing an effective and secure learning environment (new technology, resources, celebration of achievement)
- Relevant and challenging curriculum
- Appropriate and effective setting/group arrangements
- Developing a range of flexible learning strategies to meet the needs of able pupils and able underachievers (higher order thinking skills, problem solving, independent learning)
- Subject specific differentiation (outlined in departmental Gifted and Talented policies)
- Encouraging learners to reflect on the process of their own learning

There are also opportunities for all pupils to learn outside of the classroom environment. The school provides enriched and extended activities for pupils, to complement teaching and learning and also to help identify pupils' gifts and talents. The following list is indicative of the range of opportunities offered to the girls; however, it is not exhaustive.

- Provision of out of hours support
- Enrichment opportunities
- Partnership with other schools
- National and international educational visits. Science clubs
- Art & Design workshops
- Trips to concerts and musicals

- Debating club
- Magazine club
- Maths Challenge
- Visiting speakers
- Various sports clubs
- Drama club and school productions
- IGGY membership (International Gateway for the Gifted and Talented)
- iThink Club

All pupils are welcome; however, guidance and encouragement is given to pupils who would benefit from these opportunities. We endeavour to create opportunities to allow pupils to excel in various areas of the extra-curricular programme and are continually developing opportunities to provide an appropriate level of challenge for all our pupils.

Social and Emotional Needs

Class teachers, Phase Leaders and HOYs, form tutors and subject teachers are responsible for monitoring the social and emotional needs of all pupils.

Training

Whole staff INSET will include provision for the Gifted and Talented pupils, often delivered in the form of Teaching and Learning training. Heads of Department are responsible for maintaining the level of knowledge, skills and understanding and expertise to teach the most able students.

Inset September 2017 was run by the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator to discuss how we are identifying our pupils with particular attention to the difference between ‘teacher pleasers’ and genuine Gifted or Talented pupils. Staff have had follow-up discussions on a departmental level in the Senior School and on a subject level in the Prep School.

Talk-less teaching was led by Leah Kirkman during the January 2016 INSET and this training ultimately helps all pupils, but gives the pupils opportunities to lead sessions and to work independently.

Building Learning Power was introduced in September 2013 to prepare the pupils for a lifetime of learning and to create “21 century explorers”. The pupils need to have learnt how to be tenacious and resourceful, imaginative and logical, self-disciplined and self-aware, collaborative and inquisitive. Following this, INSET sessions on BLP have been offered on a regular basis, the latest being in September 2017 to the teaching staff in the whole school.

Monitoring, assessment and evaluation

The effectiveness of the school’s provision for its Gifted and Talented pupils is ultimately monitored by outcome at GCSE level but also by motivation to ensure pupils achieve as well as they can in lessons, in extra-curricular activities and Educational Quality Inspections. Pupils’ progress is tracked in consultation with the pastoral team.

Issue Date: January 2018

Review Date: January 2021

Elizabeth Thomas .

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