

CHINTHURST SCHOOL



GIFTED AND TALENTED Policy Guidelines for Teachers

TB/SN/WB February 2016 (Review Date February 2017)

Gifted and Talented

Definition

The Department for Education and Skills define gifted and talented children as:

"Those who have one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop these abilities)."

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority defines gifted and talented as:

"Gifted and talented pupils are those that will exceed the expectations for their age group, either in all subjects or just one. The gifted and talented are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied, some do well in statutory national curriculum tests or national qualifications. However, being gifted and talented covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations. Therefore, it is impossible to set one way of identifying gifted and talented pupils."

At Chinthurst we define Gifted and Talented as children with **exceptional** ability in any given subject in comparison to their year group. The term 'gifted' being used to cover academic subjects, and the term 'talented' being used to cover subjects such as the arts, sport and music. These talents may lie outside of the school curriculum. Further down the school, for example in the Pre-Prep, this definition may be widened to include those showing the potential to develop exceptional ability, who may not yet have the academic maturity to best showcase it

This group should by definition be relatively low in number. It should exclude those many children within our school who are bright and able, but whose needs are aptly covered by effective differentiation within the classroom.

Approaches to Teaching Talented and Gifted

It is important that classroom activities provide opportunities for the expression of a range of special abilities. (Differentiation)

Teachers can set higher expectations for gifted pupils and respond to their needs by offering them opportunities to:

1. Pursue topics in greater depth or to a greater level of cognitive challenge.
2. Tackle a wider range of tasks.
3. Work through activities at a faster pace.

Very able pupils could:

1. Pursue objectives that are **more complex and demanding** than those being carried out simultaneously by other pupils

For example:

A unit of work for a year 6 class based on the school prospectus or information booklet might have most pupils generate accounts of their own experiences to include in the booklet, or work together to write an introduction to the school for visitors.

Pupils with special gifts in literacy could carry out a much more demanding 'review, research and rewrite' exercise. They could critically analyse the content and design of an existing booklet and generate alternative proposals for a new document, incorporating the contributions of their fellow pupils. This would allow the most able pupils to explore how the use of language can be effectively related to illustrations and other design features of texts.

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2. Advance at a **faster pace** through the curriculum, doing work that would normally be associated with the skills and content of later key stages.

For example:

While most of a year 5 class are learning spelling conventions and rules by adding or changing suffixes to words (National Literacy Strategy, year 5, term 3), the most able pupils could be experimenting with their knowledge of spelling by inventing words using prefixes and suffixes (National Literacy Strategy, year 6, term 3).

Pupils with special literary gifts might also find it challenging to explain or define the meanings of new words to other pupils, or to define the meanings of words by investigating how they are used in a range of texts.

The most able pupils could be expected to pursue this activity independently.

3. Work in **greater depth** on curriculum content that is being studied by the class as a whole.

For example:

When a whole class is engaged in reading a poem, the most able pupils could work on a group of poems by the same author, studying the characteristics of the language and structure in order to prepare an author study highlighting particular features of the poet's style. This would involve them reading more texts than the majority of the class, considering and commenting in detail on what they have read, and presenting the results of their work in both speech and writing.

English and the Gifted and Talented

Much of the distinctiveness of able pupils' work lies in the thoughtfulness with which they already use English to communicate or interact with others and to develop new ideas. This ability affects all other subject areas. The skills they have in these areas may be enriched or extended by activities that provide stimulating opportunities for using language for learning and thinking.

These skills include:

1. Reasoning Skills

This is the ability to provide a rational analysis of a problem, to evaluate competing explanations and to reconcile different points of view.

Group-based problem-solving activities can help develop pupils' thinking skills *and* their key skills in communicating and working with others, for example by requiring them to explain their own reasoning, and to learn ways of asking questions which help clarify ideas and overcome misunderstandings. Such joint activity may also provide opportunities for able pupils to gain a more reflective understanding of their own abilities and scope for development

2. Information Skills

This is the ability to seek information from a range of written sources and use it effectively in the pursuit of an enquiry. Integrating the results of researching diverse sources can help develop pupils' ability to analyse, classify and present information, particularly if the sources offer different, and perhaps even conflicting, accounts and explanations.

Such opportunities for seeking information can also help pupils become familiar with a wider range of ways of using the language associated with particular subjects and technologies.

Challenging the Gifted and Talented

In order to challenge pupils who are gifted in mathematics, teachers should set activities that expect pupils to use a range of techniques accurately and efficiently, provide for a higher level of abstraction and lead to more advanced thinking.

When working with gifted pupils, teachers should aim to:

- lay stronger foundations;
- develop deeper understanding;
- cultivate a willingness to reflect on the connections between different aspects of mathematics;
- foster a desire to understand fully the mathematical concepts studied and the reasons why particular methods are correct;
- develop higher-level thinking skills.

Teachers at key stages 1 to 3 generally use the national curriculum and the appropriate *Framework for teaching mathematics* as the starting point for planning their mathematics lesson. Teachers need to be sensitive to the following points:

- activities should have clear goals, and should aim to **increase pupils' ability to analyse and solve problems**, stimulate originality and encourage initiative and self-direction;
- activities should **challenge pupils to develop their thinking** through, for example, observing, comparing, classifying, hypothesising, criticising, interpreting and summarising;
- when **open-ended tasks** are used, teachers need to be clear what lines pupils are likely to pursue, what processes are involved and what outcomes are achievable and expected;
- when providing additional work for gifted pupils, care should be taken to ensure that the pupils do not come to view the work as an imposition;
- gifted pupils should **not be expected to work unsupported** and undirected for extended periods.

Thinking Skills

By using thinking skills, pupils who are gifted in mathematics can focus on 'knowing how', as well as 'knowing what' (learning how to learn). Mathematics is not just a collection of skills -- it teaches pupils to think, to reason, to solve problems and to think in creative ways.

The sections of the programmes of study that relate to 'using and applying mathematics' outline relevant knowledge, skills and understanding, and provide opportunities for the development of the following thinking skills:

Enquiry Skills

The ability to ask relevant questions, to pose and define mathematical problems or enquiries, and to plan how to solve them. Gifted pupils can represent problems in algebraic, geometric or graphical form, and can select and organise what to do

Reasoning Skills

The ability to recognise patterns and generalise, and to give reasons for results and conclusions. Gifted pupils should be expected to analyse their results, looking for cause and effect, patterns and relationships. Activities in mathematics provide opportunities for them to draw inferences from data, to make deductions (stating constraints), and to present concise, reasoned arguments.

Information-processing Skills

The ability to locate and collect relevant data from a variety of suitable sources and to sort, classify and sequence the information. Gifted pupils should be expected to decide what methods and analyses are needed and to process and represent the data, using ICT as appropriate.

Creative-thinking Skills

The ability to apply their mathematical skills to new and unfamiliar situations, to extend ideas, and to solve problems by considering new and flexible ways of doing things. Gifted pupils should be expected to explore connections in their mathematical work, to use their imagination by asking questions such as **'What if?'** and **'Why?'**, and to **conjecture** and hypothesise. They should explore, identify and use pattern and symmetry in mathematical contexts, and should select and combine known facts and problem-solving strategies in creative ways to solve problems.

Evaluation Skills

The ability to evaluate information and to judge the value of their own and others' work or ideas. Gifted pupils should be expected to review progress as they work in mathematics and to use checking procedures to monitor the accuracy and appropriateness of their solutions and conclusions when solving mathematical problems. They should test and evaluate their hypotheses, and examine critically, improve, then justify their methods and their choices of presentation of their mathematics.

*****This can equally be applied to all subjects*****

Pupils who are gifted benefit from enrichment and extension activities that include key skills, in particular:

Communication

Communicating ideas, issues or information, taking into account their audience.

For example, when setting out their solutions to mathematical problems and explaining their reasoning, pupils present information and explanations in a form that suits the purpose (words, appropriate notation, graphs, charts and diagrams). When presenting their work to the class, pupils speak clearly, present their explanations in a way that suits the audience, and listen and respond appropriately to what others say.

Working with Others

Working with a partner or in a group; taking a lead in planning what needs to be done; helping others confirm their understanding of objectives, responsibilities or working arrangements; carrying out tasks and reviewing progress.

For example, when working with a partner or in a small group on a mathematical problem or enquiry, pupils collectively formulate the questions; decide what data or information to collect; select and organise the appropriate mathematics to use; agree the appropriate degree of precision; process and represent the information; and answer the initial questions, justifying how they arrived at their conclusions.

Improving own Learning and Performance

Using the '**plan-do-review cycle**' to review their performance and to set their own targets and confirm their understanding of how to meet these; making and following plans; reviewing achievements and progress.

For example, when working fractions, decimals and percentages, pupils reflect on what type of calculations they are able to do and which techniques they now have available.

Recognising the Gifted and Talented

The gifted and talented are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. Some do well in statutory national curriculum tests, world-class tests or national qualifications. However, being gifted and talented covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations. For example, gifted and talented learners may demonstrate leadership qualities, high-level practical skills or a capacity for creative thought.

It is important to recognise that not all gifted and talented learners are obvious achievers. Many actually underachieve -- their potential is masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem, lack of challenge, or low teacher/parent expectations. Others underachieve because they have learning disabilities that obscure or eclipse their gifts or talents. To enable these children and young people to fulfil their potential, it is vital to give everyone the opportunity to excel. The gifts and talents of those for whom English is an additional language are often best recognised by people who can speak to them in the language they speak at home.

Some characteristics that gifted and talented children and young people are likely to show are:

- 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 within a particular subject, or aspects of work.

Checklists of this kind should be used with caution as Gifted and talented young people do not necessarily fit these expectations.

However good the quality and scope of provision, there may reasonably be the expectation that the potential of some young people remains unlocked or untapped. The presence of such individuals and groups should always be anticipated. This will be particularly the case for gifted and talented learners who also have one or more learning disabilities.

Gifts and talents are often overlooked or go unrecognised when they lie outside the standard curriculum (for example in less common or popular areas of sport, or in certain aspects of dance and music).

How well a school or college identifies the gifted and talented will largely depend on the range of learning opportunities that it offers. Children and young people can only demonstrate their abilities if they are given opportunities to do so. The process of auditing existing provision is likely to aid in the identification of the gifted and talented by raising the awareness and capacity of the institution as a whole to recognise the full range of skills and aptitudes.

Ofsted evaluations suggest that if under-identification is to be avoided,

‘a specific approach for each subject needs to be fully developed.’

Physical education (PE) departments readily identified pupils who were good at the most popular school sports and often, as in football, these were pupils with access to local teams and weekend clubs. In solo sports, like gymnastics and swimming, the basis of identification was weaker because previous provision -- or information about it -- was less common. Lacking specific criteria, teachers found it difficult to identify aspects of performance which gave early indication of latent talent, which, if appropriately developed, might lead to high achievement.

Something of the same pattern was evident in relation to dance and **music**, where pupils with strong previous experience evident at transfer to secondary school were more likely to be identified as talented than others. This highlighted the importance of access to previous provision and the crucial factor of parental support, including the ability to pay, for example, for instrumental music tuition and transport.

Developing a Departmental Approach

The following can help subject teams and departments develop their practice in identification:

Look at the 'Identifying gifted pupils' sections in the subject-specific guidance on this site:

the [Advanced Extension Awards \(AEA\) agreed assessment criteria](#);

the ['Developing a subject policy'](#) section;

[the identifying the gifted and talented cohort - EiC; gifted and talented strand guidance](#).

Where provision allows, teachers can become aware of gifts and talents in learners as a result of:

- how they approach routine work in class and activities outside the classroom (some learners behave quite differently in the two situations);
- observing them systematically in a range of learning contexts, to identify those who demonstrate social or leadership skills, an aptitude for problem solving or acute listening skills;
- their responses to their work and talking with them about what they like, dislike, and what enables them to learn best;
- inviting them to reflect on and talk about their own strengths, interests and aspirations, perhaps in the context of personal target-setting;
- their initiative in tackling tasks or adapting conditions to suit circumstances;
- the progress they make and judging whether they achieve beyond the level of attainment expected for their age;
- their performance in national curriculum and other standardised tests, for example non-verbal reasoning tests and cognitive ability tests (CATs), or national tests and qualifications.

Teachers can also find it helpful to talk to:

- parents, carers and peers;
- tutors or mentors who see young people in a range of contexts and know about their circumstances.

Avoiding stereotyping

It is important to make sure that the full range of the school or college population is considered when identifying the gifted and talented. Coordinators, managers and teachers need to guard against stereotypes in their perceptions of gifted and talented young people.

In undertaking any audit of existing provision, schools and colleges should check that the learners identified as gifted and talented are broadly representative of the population of the institution as a whole; any significant disparity might suggest that some have been overlooked. Procedures for identifying the gifted and talented should be carefully scrutinised as a matter of course.



PUPIL RECORD

Learning Difficulties & Gifted & Talented

LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

NAME	Form Set	Subject Area of Difficulty	Focus	

GIFTED AND TALENTED

NAME	Form Set	Subject Area of Strength	Action

Name:		Learning Targets	Area of concern:
Year:			Class _____ Support by:
Age:	Date of Birth:		Teacher: _____
		Target sheet No:	Start Date:
		Review Date:	
Targets to be achieved	Achievement Criteria	Possible resources / strategies / techniques / ideas for support	Outcome

Individual Education Plan Template.

Signed: Parents/Guardian: _____ Date: _____
 G+T CO/Class Teacher: _____ Date: _____

