

Fountains Earth CE Primary SCHOOL

GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

At Fountains Earth CE Primary, we believe that all pupils are entitled to experience a curriculum which is both challenging and appropriate to their needs. If this entitlement is to be fulfilled for more able pupils, their talents need to be identified and provision made to enable them to fulfil their potential.

"It is clear from the evidence that excellence does not emerge without appropriate help. To reach an exceptionally high standard in any area, very able children need the means to learn, which includes material to work with, focused, challenging tuition and the encouragement to follow their stars."

(Educating the Very Able; Ofsted 1998)

The terms '**able, more able, very able, gifted, talented children**' are subject to different interpretations. The term 'gifted and talented' is used to describe the very able or exceptional pupils who represent 5% of the ability spectrum. A broader band of ability includes those described as 'more able' and these pupils represent the top 20% of the ability range.

Within this school, a working definition is that to be '**very able**' is to be outstanding in general intellectual ability or have a special ability in:

- a particular curricular area
- creative/productive thinking
- leadership skills
- social awareness
- the visual or performing arts
- mechanical ingenuity
- physical/sporting skills.

Fountains Earth CE Primary is committed to:

- identifying and raising standards for the 'more able' pupils.
- providing an appropriately enriched curriculum that is broad, balanced and provides opportunities for their personal and social development.
- meeting the needs of the majority of more able pupils without acceleration to a different class/phase providing that their particular areas of strength are appropriately challenged.
- the notion that parental involvement is essential in the identification of more able pupils and in the provision agreed between home and school.
- actively supporting children's involvement in the process of decision-making affecting their future education.
- to providing opportunities for the continuing professional development of all staff involved with more able pupils.

In seeking to identify the more able and gifted and talented pupils teachers are recommended to base judgements on information drawn from a combination of sources:

1. Observation: Teachers are skilled in building up detailed pictures of the pupils in their care through careful observation combined with perception. A subjective assessment can prove notoriously inaccurate if there is a tendency to rate most highly only those pupils who are persevering, conforming, tidy and industrious. Observations must be objective and avoid bias which might be racial, cultural or gender based. Observation should be systematic and supported by evidence.

2. Checklist information: Teachers at Fountains Earth CE Primary will use the following checklist which focuses on the perceived characteristics of gifted pupils:

- Learns easily
- Original, imaginative, creative
- Persistent, resourceful, self-directed
- Inquisitive, sceptical
- Informed in unusual areas often beyond their years
- Artistic
- Outstanding vocabulary, verbally fluent
- Special ability in music
- Independent worker, shows or takes initiative
- Good judgement, logical
- Versatile, many interests
- Shows high level of sensitivity, empathy
- Has excellent sense of humour
- Exhibits unusually extroverted or introverted behaviour within a group
- Unusually high motivation and self-expression
- Speed and agility of thought and preference for verbal rather than written expression
- Shows leadership qualities
- Socially adept
- Special ability in physical/sporting skills
- Behavioural indicators - frustration/deliberate poor behaviour
- Happily self-contained.

3. Detailed knowledge of the child: A more able pupil could be identified by a previous school, play group or nursery, by a fellow pupil or by self referral. Parents, carers, pupil support services, health professionals and other agencies may identify the more able pupil. Liaison is important along with a willingness to follow up such referrals with objective, careful observation.

4. Standardised tests: Results of standardised tests are to be used to supplement teachers' observations as well as any formative and summative assessments. Summative assessments may be useful to support the teacher's impression that a child has considerable reasoning ability. They may also help to identify the under-achiever or the able child with a specific difficulty. Care is needed in choosing tests and in interpreting results.

A] Foundation Stage Profiles: Pupils who quickly achieve the 'expected' level in all Prime and Specific areas of learning and move on to 'exceed' these by the end of the year may be identified, especially if they are younger than 4 years 6 months. Any pupil who does so, may have a particular ability in that/those areas/s at that time. Further advice may be sought from either the advisory team or the designated Early Years Consultant.

B] KS1/KS2: Teacher assessment that consistently shows a child to be demonstrating outstanding rates of progress in reading, writing or maths needs considering more closely, especially if the child is a summer birthday. Any child achieving 100% in the reading and maths summative assessments may show a particular aptitude for these areas of the curriculum

SCHOOL STRATEGIES

To provide a challenging and enriching curriculum for the more able we will employ a range of the following:

1] Ability grouping:

- ability grouping within a mixed ability class;
- setting with an able set and the rest as mixed ability
- attendance at cluster opportunities for individual subjects.

2] Acceleration:

- The social importance of pupils being educated within their peer group is recognised and only when it is in the best interests of the pupil will s/he be taught in a class of older pupils.
- Application for early transfer to secondary school will only be considered in exceptional cases and where academic ability is matched by social and emotional maturity. When early transfer to secondary school is deemed advantageous to the pupil the LA's recommended procedures will be followed and will involve discussions between the parents, relevant Headteachers, Local Education Office and Pupil and Parent Services.

3] Differentiated tasks:

- Within any grouping the more able will be set different tasks, requiring greater sophistication within a common theme or topic.
- Pupils will be encouraged to challenge themselves
- We will seek advice and support from LA subject advisers or others with expertise in the Teaching Alliance if needed.

4] Enrichment or extension activities:

- If more able pupils complete the basic tasks more quickly than other pupils, or if they are motivated to take things further, additional materials or tasks will be provided, intended to broaden or deepen skills and understanding.
- Enrichment frequently involves investigational and problem solving activities using logic and lateral thinking.

5] School based enrichment activities:

- clubs such as chess, computing;
- sports teams;
- music (The Bridge Band of JCB), drama, dance and art groups;
- competitions;

6] Out of school enrichment or extension activities:

- courses at local colleges
- local youth groups and activities;
- LA, cluster or national courses and activities targeted at able pupils;
- local adult clubs or societies;

7] Visiting specialists:

- higher education and secondary inputs into the work of schools in the phase below;
- day visits by writers, artists, musicians and other celebrities;
- Artist in residence placements;
- Providing opportunities for contact/Internet access to experts

8] Mentors:

- A more able pupil or a group of pupils can be supported in undertaking extended project work by other pupils, a staff member or volunteers from the community who have an appropriate interest and expertise. [subject to all DBS and health checks]

Whatever the strategies employed, the role of the teacher is central. More able pupils will only flourish if the teacher recognises and is sympathetic towards their special needs and takes steps to ensure that they are met. There is a clear link between teacher expectation and pupil performance and no more so than where more able pupils are concerned. Very often the more able pupils are some of the most difficult to deal with in a school context. They may get bored easily, refuse to accept without question the things their teachers take for granted and they often dislike established rules. More able pupils will not be left to their own devices, with confidence that they will make it anyway. To achieve high standards the continuing involvement of the teacher is vital - to challenge understanding, to develop skills and responses, to encourage the taking of the next step. The school will support the teacher through access to appropriate subject expertise, staff development and learning resources. Tact, humour, self-confidence (even a degree of humility) are needed by all teachers, but are especially helpful when seeking to extend pupils who may be more able.

To this extent Fountains Earth CE Primary will provide:

- subject expertise/enthusiasm;
- differentiated task setting;
- high expectations of what pupils can achieve;
- careful monitoring of pupils progress;
- flexible styles of teaching and learning;
- flexible approaches to classroom organisation;
- access to appropriate resources;
- a lively, stimulating environment where outstanding work is celebrated through display, and expectations of what can be achieved are raised for both teachers and pupils
- differentiated teaching so they can gain mastery of subjects.

More able pupils will be given as many opportunities as possible to:

- work collaboratively with others of similar ability;
- investigate
- problem solve
- work independently;
- pursue ideas through research;
- access appropriate resources, such as ICT, experts etc;
- engage in open ended tasks;

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In identifying the more able pupil, teachers will ask themselves the following questions:

1. Are there any pupils in my classes whom I would consider to be more able?
2. On what basis do I make this judgement?
3. Do I take seriously comments from parents?
4. Do I have any pupil(s) whose poor behaviour may mask frustrated ability?
5. Do I have any pupil who may be doing well but is still, I suspect, working considerably below capacity?
6. What combination of approaches might I use to identify more able pupils?
7. What do I do now to meet the needs of more able pupils?
8. What strategies could I consider in order to meet more fully the individual needs of the more able?
9. What would be the issues to be thought through for each of those strategies?
10. Which strategies could I use here?
11. Does the school have an ethos which encourages the more able to demonstrate and develop their abilities? If not, what can I do about it?
12. What teaching and learning styles do I feel would best allow pupils of high ability to work at an appropriately challenging level?