



North Stainley CE Primary School

Policy for More Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils

RATIONALE

*"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)*

At North Stainley CE Primary School we aim to provide all of our children with a curriculum that supports, develops and extends their abilities, skills and understanding. We aim to plan our teaching and learning so that every child is given the opportunity to achieve their full potential, including those children who display a marked aptitude or ability. This aim is encapsulated in our school mission statement:



Extensive research in the field provides four strong arguments for why schools need to provide effectively for the needs of the more able, gifted and talented:

- In so doing, the learning, expectations and the achievements of pupils of **all** abilities is enhanced;
- HMI and Ofsted reports continue to identify groups of children underachieving, and these often are drawn from the more able groups within the school.
- Any able pupils, if not extended and enriched by the education they receive, frequently resort to anti-social behaviour both at school and in society as a whole;
- By failing to extend the more able, we are contributing to an enormous waste of talent for the community and the economy as a whole.

"Every child therefore has the right to go as far and as fast along every dimension of the school curriculum as is necessary for them to reach their considerable potential." (David George, 2003)

This policy sets out our structured approach to providing for more able, gifted and talented pupils, giving them opportunities to demonstrate their gifts and talents.

AIMS

The primary aim of this document is to support inclusion by ensuring a consistent approach to the identification, provision and support of the more able, gifted or talented pupils in our school. To achieve this, we aim to:

- ◆ have an agreed, shared definition of the terms 'more able', 'gifted' and 'talented' and 'exceptionally able';
- ◆ promote a consistent approach for all members of staff to cater for more able, gifted and talented pupils;
- ◆ identify more able, gifted and talented pupils at the earliest possible opportunity (especially when they transfer from another school);

- ◆ substantiate this identification by the use of objective assessment measures;
- ◆ provide more able, gifted and talented pupils with an appropriately challenging and differentiated education, enabling them to work at a high cognitive level;
- ◆ provide opportunities for these pupils to develop their specific skills and talents;
- ◆ raise staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them for meeting the needs of more able, gifted and talented pupils;
- ◆ work in partnership with parents / carers to help them promote their children's learning and development;
- ◆ provide for the needs of the whole child – emotional, social, spiritual, physical and intellectual;
- ◆ provide a point of reference for teachers to support them in dealing with pupils with particular needs;
- ◆ be able to provide a response to parents' enquiries about more able, gifted and talented pupils;
- ◆ monitor the progress of more able, gifted and talented pupils;
- ◆ promote high expectations and standards;
- ◆ foster a supportive learning environment where success and achievements are encouraged and celebrated;
- ◆ play a role in extending good practice to all pupils in the school;
- ◆ make best use of links with other schools and the wider community to enhance learning opportunities.

DEFINITIONS

Different definitions abound DCSF defines the group supported by the National Programme for Gifted and Talented education as:

“Children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities).” (May 2008)

This broad, general definition covers potential as well as actual achievement in intellectual ability, creativity, leadership, visual and performing arts, and psycho-motor ability, and thereby provides many opportunities for children to have access to our provision of extension and enrichment. In the general population, research suggests that only between 1% and 3% are truly gifted, but our definition is wider and context-specific.

Consequently, this policy partly refers to the 20% or so ‘more able’ pupils in our school, most of whom will be catered for by normal differentiation of work or specific organisational strategies within the class, referred to later. In previous advice from the Government, it was suggested that about 5 - 10% of all pupils **in each school** should be considered as gifted and talented irrespective of context, and it is these children to whom the majority of the policy applies. Whilst mindful of these percentages, they are merely for guidance. Staff must bear in mind, then, that a pupil may be in the 5-10% group in one school, but might not be in such a group in another school.

Our school adopts the definitions used by the DCSF which identifies:

- ◆ **gifted pupils** as those who are capable of excelling in academic subjects such as English, maths or history; and

- ◆ **talented pupils** as those who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills, social skills such as leadership, or practical abilities such as in games and PE, drama or art.

Pupils may be gifted and / or talented in more than one area.

In this policy we therefore also recognise gifted and talented pupils to be those who may demonstrate an outstanding ability in specific areas such as:

- creative/productive thinking
- leadership skills
- social awareness
- the visual or performing arts
- mechanical ingenuity
- physical / sporting skills
- high intelligence

(Adapted from Ogilvie, 1972)

IDENTIFICATION

Ability is complex; more able, gifted and talented pupils are not a homogenous group, but exhibit a wide range of individual differences. Some higher ability children might not perform well in test situations, others might be underachieving and in danger of having their abilities overlooked, and others still may not want to 'stand out in the crowd' and so hide their gifts and talents. In order to achieve as broad and balanced a picture as possible, we therefore use a wide range of strategies for identification. This process is ongoing and needs to involve staff, pupils, parents and carers, a combination of quantitative and qualitative data, and is viewed as part of good teaching. The main strategies we therefore draw upon are:

1. Teachers' assessments based on observation and previous records / transfer information;
2. Pupils' work and challenging teaching methods;
3. Check lists
4. Tests (if applicable for age range) e.g. NCTs, reading, spelling, non-verbal reasoning (NFER), World Class Tests, CAT etc.;
5. Sharing information with other teachers, subject specialists or external agencies e.g. Gifted and Talented Leading Teacher, peripatetic music staff, swimming instructors, etc;
6. Consultation with parents / carers;
7. Consultation with pupils (peer/self nomination);

1. Teachers' assessments / observations

- Observation should be systematic and supported by evidence, either in checklist format or examples of work.
- Observations must be objective and avoid bias which might be racial, cultural or gender based.
- Informal summative and formative assessments are considered.

2. Pupils' work and challenging teaching methods

The quality of work compared to their peers, particularly their response to increased challenge and higher-order thinking, is particularly useful. Teaching methods that emphasise problem-solving, thinking skills and divergent responses should provide the enrichment needed to nurture the strengths of children so that no child who has the potential to succeed is denied the opportunity of being identified and therefore extended.

3. Checklists

A useful starting point in the identification of gifted and talented children is to use a behaviour checklist, such as the ones in the booklet *'Identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started'* (DCSF May 2008 ref: 00367-2008). A number of more general checklists which focus on the perceived characteristics of highly able, gifted and talented pupils are also widely published. Qualities such as rapid learning ability, imagination and perseverance are common to most.

In the DCSF booklet, a separate checklist for Foundation Stage children is included. Children in the Foundation Stage come to us with a variety of levels of experience, but for the highly able it is anticipated that they will be achieving Level 9 in some or all areas of the Foundation Stage Profile before the end of FS2. These children's needs will be discussed and provided for appropriately, and their progress carefully tracked. For Early Years, the field of gifted and talented education is recognised as being the spotting and nurturing of potential gifts and talents.

4. Tests

Test results may be useful to support a teacher's impression that a pupil has considerable reasoning ability. They may also help to identify the under-achiever or the highly able child with a specific difficulty. However, care is needed in choosing tests and interpreting results. Intelligence tests may be subject to cultural bias; unfamiliarity with a particular type of problem will influence scores; a poor reader may not reveal his true potential on a pencil and paper test of verbal reasoning. As a guide, the following can be considered:

Standardized Scores for the identification of 'more able' pupils

- Reading age at least 2 years in advance of C.A.
- Standardised score of 125+.
- Percentile score of 95+.
- Pupils achieving a Level 3 on Key Stage 1 NCTs, or up to a level above age-expected norms in Key Stage 2.

Standardized Scores for the identification of gifted and/or talented pupils

- Standardised score of 141+
- Pupils achieving (or expected to achieve) a good Level 5 or above in end of Key Stage 2 NCTs.
- Pupils achieving (or expected to achieve) a good Level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1,
- Pupils performing at more a level or more above age-expected norms in a subject.

It is necessary to keep in mind that criterion-referenced tests such as NCTs will tell you what an individual pupil knows and can or can't do, whereas norm-referenced tests such

as NFER-Nelson's Verbal Reasoning Series will tell you how individual pupils are performing in relation to their age-related peers.

5. *Sharing information with other teachers*

Identification of specific pupils should be discussed with **all** relevant professionals. General characteristics for each curriculum area have also been published by QCA and may provide a useful starting point.

6. *Consultation with parents / carers*

Dialogue with parents is crucial in the process of identification, particularly when pupils first join the school. For the youngest children in particular, asking pertinent questions may mean that early signs of giftedness can be spotted. Teachers should be wary of the unqualified use of the terms 'gifted' with parents, as they may be open to misinterpretation. Parents should be made aware that identified abilities are **in relation to the school context**, and that past and future schools may well have very different contexts.

7. *Consultation with pupils*

More able, gifted and talented pupils, particular older ones, could be identified by self-referral. Fellow pupils are also usually very honest about their views on who the class 'expert' is in different areas.

UNDERACHIEVERS

Gifted and talented children are at a high risk both emotionally and psychologically of underachievement, in that their unique intellectual or creative abilities make them vulnerable at home and school to pressures which may initiate underachievement. Identification of such pupils based on test results may be problematical, and alternative methods are required. Understanding the behaviour and recognising the characteristics are essential if we are to provide a remedy. Such pupils typically fall into three groups:

1. low self-esteem;
2. academic avoidance behaviour;
3. poor study skills, poor peer acceptance and lack of concentration.

Typical characteristics of the underachiever, together with some possible strategies we can adopt, are included as an Appendix to this policy.

PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (Dual or Multiple Exceptionality)

It is important to recognise that some pupils with physical, medical, emotional or other special educational needs may also have considerable abilities or talents which may be underestimated in using conventional testing methods.

Therefore, it is important to remember:

- The assessment and information gathering process is crucial to identifying particular strengths as well as weaknesses.
- Where a pupil's intellectual ability is not impaired an alternative means of accessing the curriculum has to be found (e.g. Braille, radio aids, ITC, tape recorder etc) in order for the pupil to realise their full potential.

REGISTER OF PUPILS / PLAN OF PROVISION

Approximately 5 – 10% of our school population will be placed on our Gifted and Talented Register. The register should be broadly reflective on the school's population. The following procedures should be carried out when placing a pupil on the register:

- Class teachers should inform the G&T Leading Teacher of pupils they consider to be gifted or talented on arrival at our school, or at any point during the year.
- A comprehensive electronic register of these pupils will be kept centrally, with termly review dates set by the Leading Teacher. The register will be reviewed regularly by each class teacher, in consultation with the Leading Teacher;
- The Leading Teacher should be informed of changes during the year;
- The register should be used by subject leaders to enable them to track relevant pupils and offer guidance as appropriate to class teachers;
- Parents will be informed if their pupil is entered on the register, and informed of any subsequent changes;
- Parents may also be invited to school to discuss ways in which the pupil's needs can be met and how they can be supported at home.

For a small number of exceptionally able pupils, particularly all-rounders, who present particular challenges to staff when planning for their classes, an Individual Plan of Provision is written in consultation with parents. This is reviewed at least annually.

PROVISION

1. Organisation Strategies

To meet the needs of our more able, gifted and talented pupils, a range of organisational approaches are used, including:

- individual target setting;
- restructuring class organisation or pupil grouping (e.g. setting, acceleration within the class, fast-tracking or curriculum compaction);
- acceleration – working with older pupils in a subject or actually being placed within an older year-group (in very special circumstances);
- providing relevant school clubs;
- creating links with other schools;
- creating links with outside-school providers (e.g. in the performing arts & music);
- withdrawing groups for enrichment opportunities.

2. Within the Classroom

However, we believe that provision for our more able, gifted and talented children is an integral part of the daily learning opportunities that we provide for **all** pupils. We aim to provide an effective learning environment where:

- ◆ pupils are given regular access to higher-order thinking skills and tasks;
- ◆ pupils' own interests and learning styles are valued;
- ◆ assessment is used to determine what is already known as well as what has been learned;
- ◆ knowledge of prior attainment is used to identify next steps for learning;
- ◆ objectives are shared and links are made across the curriculum;
- ◆ tasks are suitably pitched and offer variety and interest;
- ◆ a range of questioning techniques are used to extend and reflect upon learning (e.g. Bloom's Taxonomy);
- ◆ regular and appropriate feedback is provided;
- ◆ pupils are encouraged to use their initiative and take risks;
- ◆ differentiated homework is set;
- ◆ pupils feel supported and valued;
- ◆ success is celebrated.

Particularly successful strategies for challenging the more able, gifted and talented are:

- ◆ problem-solving and investigation to develop reasoning and thinking-skills;
- ◆ using open-ended questions and tasks;
- ◆ introducing elements of competition within and outside the peer group;
- ◆ providing competition against self through target-setting;
- ◆ creating opportunities for creative and productive thinking.

Teachers receive appropriate training and support to meet the needs of more able, gifted and talented pupils, as required.

3. Beyond the Classroom

North Stainley CE Primary School has a long tradition of providing out-of-class activities to enrich and extend pupils' experiences. Wherever possible, activities to develop the whole child are organised and these will be of particular benefit to more able, gifted or talented pupils. They include:

- ◆ running specialist after school clubs;
- ◆ organising residential visits;
- ◆ creating opportunities to work with visiting experts (e.g. authors, artists, history days, theatre groups);
- ◆ holding occasional enrichment / timetable-collapse days;
- ◆ developing specialist accommodation (e.g. art, music, drama facilities);
- ◆ participating in cluster events with other schools;
- ◆ fostering wider links with secondary school provision;
- ◆ creating links with outside agencies (music tuition, sports coaches etc.).

We also try to enrich and extend the curriculum specifically for the most able through:

- ◆ supporting master-classes (e.g. Summer School programmes);
- ◆ mentoring by either a similarly talented or suitably encouraging adult;

- ◆ considering enrichment activities provided by outside associations and organisations (e.g. Regional Partnership / Excellence Hub opportunities)
- ◆ entering pupils in local and National competitions & exams;
- ◆ creating specific enrichment opportunities during the day for groups (withdrawal);
- ◆ using additional support, TAs, other adults, older pupils and parents for 1:1 or group-work to extend pupils in a specific area (social or academic).

4. Outside school

The most effective support the school can provide to parents of more able, gifted and talented pupils is via open communication of information about progress and strategies adopted. The school will need to make use of:

- ◆ subject specialists;
- ◆ visiting experts / mentors;
- ◆ the library service;
- ◆ specialist clubs and societies;
- ◆ national associations;
- ◆ extended schools
- ◆ the Internet.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES - DIFFERENTIATION

A range of strategies are employed – differentiation through pace, task, dialogue, support, outcome, resource, content and responsibility. We also specifically use the five key dimensions referred to by QCA in planning for our highly able pupils, and create activities that are:

- broader
- deeper
- faster and allow for:
- independence
- reflection

Broader means that several learning objectives can be put together, as these pupils are more able to work at more complex tasks. They can be asked to apply their understanding in less familiar contexts. For example:

- applying knowledge or techniques to other subjects or other areas of the same subject.

Deeper makes the objective more demanding and may be more complex or more abstract in order to challenge. For example by:

- giving a pupil less time to complete a task;
- giving a pupil more time to complete a task in greater depth; or
- making a task more open ended.

Faster uses objectives from later years, where there is a clear line of progression. If pupils are ready to move on they will work on objectives from one or more years above their chronological year group.

Working independently pupils can set their own challenges and extend their own ideas with little support. Also gifted and talented pupils may be given time to work independently on more suitable tasks, sometimes using ICT, to extend their work. Sometimes they will be given more responsibility. For example:

- by providing regular contributions to newsletters or the school website;
- by supporting other pupils or contributing to the leading of group tasks with peers.

Time to reflect on and evaluate what has been achieved makes their understanding explicit. The gifted or talented pupil can do this when they are given the opportunity to:

- report back on independent tasks;
- summarise during group tasks;
- make their thinking explicit;
- extend their thinking and evaluation during a specific task with the support of TA time;
- meet with a mentor to review progress.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Good communication is vital for ensuring that we continue to offer consistency of support for our more able, gifted and talented children. This includes communication:

- between teacher and pupil;
- between teachers, Leading Teacher and subject leaders;
- between phases/schools;
- with parents and carers.

Class Teachers

The responsibilities of the class teacher are to:

- take steps to identify more able, gifted and talented pupils within their class as soon as possible, especially when they enter from other schools;
- agree, plan and implement appropriate provision, including it in medium and short term plans as appropriate;
- challenge more able, gifted and talented pupils, encouraging them to take risks;
- record strategies to be used and regularly review provision;
- provide relevant information to others when such pupils transfer;
- liaise with the Leading Teacher and parents throughout the time the pupils are in the class;
- use techniques such as circle-time to develop aspects of emotional intelligence;
- share / discuss good practice;
- provide pastoral support, in close liaison with home, for any pupils having difficulties coming to terms with their talents;
- contribute to the inclusive ethos of encouraging and celebrating diversity the school strives to create.

Subject Leaders

Part of a subject leader's role is to ensure that the needs of the more able, gifted and talented pupils are being catered for appropriately. They are responsible for:

- liaising with the class teachers, Leading Teacher and TAs in the identification of more able, gifted and talented pupils;
- reviewing schemes of work to ensure that the needs of more able, gifted and talented pupils are met through classroom management (including pupils grouping), materials and other resources, activities, assessment, and homework, self-study and out-of-hours learning;
- working collaboratively with staff to prepare, discuss and team teach;
- supporting professional development sessions.

Subject Leaders may find the following link useful:

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/search/inclusion/results/nav:82337>

Parents / carers

We recognise that the parents/carers of our gifted and talented pupils are partners in their child's education. We aim to ensure that parents/carers:

- are listened to;
- are kept informed of decisions affecting their child such as reasons for inclusion on the register;
- feel secure that their child's needs have been recognised and are being met;
- are given relevant advice (including information on the range of activities that their child might access beyond school);
- feel supported.

Parents can support their gifted / talented child by:

- telling the school about their child's talents and abilities beyond the classroom;
- providing a good environment at home where he/she can study and supporting him/her in their studies;
- taking an interest in homework activities;
- seeking advice when their child is experiencing difficulties;
- encouraging their child to take part in worthwhile out-of-school activities;
- being aware that their child will need a variety of skills and experience in order to fulfil their potential.

GIFTED AND TALENTED LEADING TEACHERS

The school's current G&T Lead is Mrs Elizabeth Watts. The Leading Teacher is the focal point for pupils, parents and staff, but it is recognised that the role does not involve performing all activities associated with our gifted and talented programmes, but rather to coordinate them. A key source of National information can be found in the National Strategies website

<http://nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/giftedandtalented?stakeholder=14>

For Local Authority news, information and support, materials are available withing Fronter in the North Yorks: Gifted and talented room: <http://fronter.com/northyorks>

Responsibilities may include:

- ◆ maintaining the school's registers, in consultation with staff, and reviewing it from time to time to see if it broadly reflects the school's population (e.g. to check that vulnerable groups are not being overlooked)
- ◆ supporting staff in the identification of gifted and talented pupils by twice yearly reviews of assessments and discussions with relevant class teachers – collating the assessment materials and results
- ◆ ensuring liaison with parents occurs
- ◆ planning, alongside colleagues and other coordinators, an appropriate curriculum for members of our cohort of gifted and talented pupils
- ◆ development of INSET for teachers and training for TAs
- ◆ identification and supervision of suitable mentors for pupils, as appropriate
- ◆ resources
- ◆ keeping up to date with current initiatives and knowledge about gifted and talented pupils, and disseminating this as appropriate to colleagues
- ◆ developing links with organisations which represent gifted and talented pupils
- ◆ monitoring and reviewing provision across the school on a regular basis
- ◆ the development of, and regular reviews of, this policy in consultation with the rest of the staff

The job description is appended (Appendix 2).

MONITORING, ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION & REVIEW

Pupils' achievements will be monitored and evaluated against set individual targets and assessment data. This process will include:

- regular observation, scrutiny of work and tests, and recording of progress;
- encouraging pupils to assess and review their own performance;
- discussing progress with the pupils themselves and their parents;
- valuing out-of-school achievements;
- intervention activities to prevent underachievement.

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis as part of our School Improvement Plan, in consultation with staff and the Governing Body.

Policy first written by Matt Blyton (General Adviser, North Yorkshire LA) in January 2005, then revised in Jan 2013. It is reviewed annually by the Governing Body

Appendix 1

Gifted and talented underachievers

Typical Characteristics

A profile of an underachiever may include the following:

- ◆ poor test performance
- ◆ orally knowledgeable but poor in written work
- ◆ superior comprehension and retention of concepts when interested
- ◆ apparently bored
- ◆ achieving below expectations in basic subjects
- ◆ restless or inattentive
- ◆ daily work often incomplete or poorly done
- ◆ dislikes practice work
- ◆ absorbed in a private world
- ◆ tactless and impatient of slower minds
- ◆ prefers friendship with older pupils or adults
- ◆ excessively self-critical
- ◆ unable to make good relationships with peer group and teachers
- ◆ emotionally unstable – low self-esteem, withdrawn and sometimes aggressive
- ◆ has wide range of interests and possibly an area of real expertise.

(Taken from David George's 'Gifted Education – Identification and Provision', 2003)

*Because of continual failures in some areas, underachieving gifted pupils tend to exhibit either of two basic behaviour patterns: **aggressive** or **withdrawn**.*

The features of the aggressive behaviour pattern are:

- ✓ Stubborn refusal to comply with requests
- ✓ Attention seeking
- ✓ Disruption of others
- ✓ Continual reflection of set work
- ✓ Absence of self-direction in decision making
- ✓ Continual alienation of peers

The features of withdrawal behaviour pattern are:

- ✓ Lack of communication
- ✓ Fantasy world
- ✓ Working alone
- ✓ Continual reflection of set work
- ✓ Little in-class work undertaken
- ✓ Little attempt made to justify behaviour

FACTORS INFLUENCING UNDERACHIEVEMENT

It is important to determine the causes of underachievement in order to alleviate the problem.

Some are listed here:

- Medical
- Physical
- Perfectionism
- A desire to fit in
- Emotional status (grief, separation)
- Low self-esteem
- Pressure to conform
- Perceptions of peers towards the individual
- Expectations (of self and others)
- A feeling of powerlessness
- Lack of autonomy
- Being unchallenged

Some Useful Strategies

Developing Control of Learning

- ☞ Realistic goal setting
- ☞ Appropriate classroom environments

Providing an opportunity to perform

- ☞ By increased stimulation and complexity
- ☞ By meta-cognitive training

Encouraging Positive relationships

- ☞ Faster risk taking
- ☞ Co-operation and collaboration is encouraged

Appendix 2

Job Description: G&T Leading Teacher

Whole-school Provision for Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils

Reporting to: Head Teacher and Governors

On appointment, to discuss with headteacher and staff, school philosophy on education for more able and what is understood by provision.

Job Description

To:

1. Exemplify effective provision for able, gifted and talented pupils in the classroom and beyond
2. In consultation with the headteacher, governors and staff, to produce, develop monitor, evaluate and refine a whole-school policy for meeting the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils
3. Lead the implementation of the whole-school policy, supported by the head teacher, senior managers and governors
4. Work with department and subject managers to ensure a suitably differentiated and challenging curriculum of opportunity
5. Make a wide range of learning opportunities available to pupils, within and beyond the school
6. Manage the development of resources
7. Monitor the overall progress made by able, gifted and talented pupils
8. Manage the support of staff and dissemination of effective practice
9. Ensure that provision for able, gifted and talented pupils is kept at the heart of the school's agenda for developing learning and teaching
10. Work with the school's manager of CPD to ensure that staff receive suitable training and development in identification and provision, organising and leading CPD
11. Keep-up-to-date with current thinking and major initiatives. Network with other co-ordinators and maintain contact with national organisations such as NACE
12. Consult with staff at all levels and ensure the effective exchange of information within school and with other schools, particularly for transfer and transition