

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

Background

The 2005 White Paper, Higher Standards: Better Schools for All, set out the Government's ambition that every pupil - gifted and talented, struggling or average - should have the right personalised support to reach the limits of their capability. For gifted and talented pupils, this means better stretch and challenge in every classroom and in every school with opportunities to further their particular talents outside school at a local and national level.

'There are gifted and talented pupils in every school, but schools define their own populations. We believe that ability is evenly distributed throughout the population, so a school's gifted and talented cohort should be broadly representative of its whole school population.'

Definition

Gifted and talented children are those who have one or more attributes/abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop these abilities).

In England the term 'Gifted' refers to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects such as English or History.

'Talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities, such as in games and PE, drama, or art.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

Roles and Responsibilities

The Class Teacher

The Teacher in the classroom is at the heart of our School's provision for pupils with Gifted and Talented attributes/abilities.

It is the class teacher/subject teacher's enthusiasm, skill and the quality of the relationships they engender within the class that will largely determine whether such pupils are able to make the progress of which they are capable.

The Class teacher will identify to the Deputy Headteacher any pupils who, in their opinion, consistently demonstrate gifted and talented attributes/abilities

Deputy Headteacher (Additional Needs)

The Deputy Headteacher working with the Assistant Headteachers, has specific responsibility for all aspects of the School work with pupils with Gifted and Talented attributes/abilities. The Deputy Headteacher:

- Supports the School and staff in the identification of pupils with Gifted and Talented attributes/abilities, in setting appropriate targets and in monitoring the progress they make
- Keeps up to date with information about resources and services and is responsible for sharing this information with colleagues and parents.
- Encourages the development of suitable in-house enrichment opportunities as well as extra- curricular activities.
- Co-ordinates the use of external agencies or people from the community, resources and facilities.
- Contributes to all aspects of whole school planning and policy making.
- Facilitates and contributes to staff development and training.
- Liaises with the named School Governor.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the quality of the educational provision for all pupils in the School, including those with Gifted and Talented attributes/abilities.

Organisation

The National Curriculum

When planning for gifted and talented pupils, our School takes advantage of the flexibility allowed by the National Curriculum.

Within the requirement to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, we may put particular emphases on some subjects or approaches in the curriculum for some pupils. There are no nationally prescribed time allowances for National Curriculum subjects.

Programmes of study set out what the majority of pupils should be taught by the end of the Key Stage. It is not necessary for pupils to study all National Curriculum subjects each week, term or year. We may decide to concentrate on particular subjects or aspects of the curriculum during a particular term or year. As long as the full programme of study is covered by the end of the key stage, we can decide the time weighting in any particular term or year.

Transfer and transition

Good communication between teachers of different phases, and from year to year within a school is essential if suitable provision is to be made for gifted and talented learners. The information shared at point of transfer within and between schools should include details of an individual's.

- preferred learning styles;
- particular strengths and weaknesses;
- displays of resourcefulness and initiative;
- work covered;
- targets for further development.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

Much of this information can be shared through discussion, as well as through documentation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the quality of the educational provision for all pupils in the school, including those with Gifted and Talented attributes/abilities.

Deputy Headteacher (Additional Needs)

The Deputy Headteacher working with the Assistant Headteachers, has specific responsibility for all aspects of the school work with such pupils.

The Deputy Headteacher will report back to the Governing Body during the Summer Term, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the Gifted and Talented provision in the School.

Governors

The named Governor has a special interest in, and is able to support any Gifted and Talented development in the school.

This Policy was endorsed by Governors in May 2008.

It will be reviewed annually.

Gifted and Talented

Additional Notes and Guidance

**Broader and Narrower Than You Think
A Range of "Outstandingness"**

There is amongst Gifted and Talented children a range of outstanding ability:

1. The reality of high ability is no longer seen as a matter of a single monolithic "Giftedness", covering the whole spectrum of human ability. Instead, current wisdom finds it more realistic to think in terms of several distinct types of ability, which often appear relatively independently of each other, rather than seeing them as facets of a more general high ability. Howard Gardner (1993) expresses this diversity in the concept of multiple intelligences, identifying eight distinct aspects of ability:
 - Linguistic (facility with language)
 - Mathematical/Logical (reasoning, organisation, calculation, abstract and structured thinking)
 - Visual/Spatial (ability to think in pictures/mental images, use movement to assist learning)
 - Musical/Auditory (skill with rhythm, pitch and musical patterns)
 - Kinaesthetic (physical skills, hand-eye co-ordination)
 - Interpersonal (skill in communicating, leadership, sensitivity to others)
 - Intrapersonal (self-awareness, self-motivation, self-directing)
 - Natural (skill in the natural sciences).
2. Gifted and Talented children vary enormously across this range in the extent of their outstanding ability:

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

- A relatively small number may be outstanding in many of these areas of ability;
- Many have high ability across a relatively narrower range;
- Some are outstandingly able in only one of these aspects of ability; for example, art or a particular sport or a specific craft skill.

The task of identifying outstanding ability is further complicated by the fact that the opportunity to bring high ability to notice varies widely from one aspect of learning to another. High ability in some curriculum areas for example, sport, music or mathematics is much more readily noticed than it is in other, equally valid, areas of learning, for example, design technology or geographical awareness.

Schools seeking to provide appropriately for Gifted and Talented pupils therefore risk two contrasting dangers:

- They may assume a child's outstanding performance in one or two aspects of learning indicates a broader range of ability than is the case; or
- They may identify high performance in a specific skill area and assume that the task is to provide appropriately in that one area, when in fact the pupil has unrecognised (and possibly greater) ability in other aspects of learning.

This is in addition to the risk of failing to recognise the high ability of the all-round underachiever.

A particular problem in misjudging the extent of high ability, which profoundly affects decision making about specific children's giftedness, relates to academic, chronological and social age. A child who is academically years ahead of his/her peer group may have the personal maturity of an average child of his/her age - and possibly the social skills of an even younger child.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

How can we identify Gifted and Talented children?

The key factor in effective identification is to use as many sources of information as possible. In the primary phase, identification systems may well rely heavily on the professional judgement of one teacher. However, this judgement still needs to be made using a variety of assessment criteria.

These might include:

Parental information

Parents know a great deal about their children's own talents and strengths. They should not be underestimated as a source of information when identifying gifted and talented children. Many schools make a point of interviewing parents before their child starts school and asking them about any particular strengths of their child.

Teacher nomination

Teachers are in the best position to use their professional judgement when identifying gifted and talented. However, research suggests that teachers can underestimate what a child can do. Too much emphasis may be placed on neatly produced work or standard rather than divergent response.

There is a risk in not identifying Gifted and Talented children who are unable to meet the demands of targeted support or missing pupils whose ability is hidden - perhaps even from themselves - behind a mask of untidiness, disorganisation and perhaps reluctance. Identification must see past immediate impressions to locate the underachieving Gifted and Talented child as well as the conventionally high attainer.

Checklists

Checklists can be useful in raising standards but they need to be treated with a degree of caution.

Most checklists address general issues, but some are subject specific. While such checklists facilitate judgement because they focus more specifically on the kind of cognitive behaviour to be found within curriculum subjects, they also highlight the possibility that a pupil might be outstandingly able in one subject area, or one aspect of learning, and not in another.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

The majority of pupils fall into this category. Identification needs to concern itself not only with the all-round highly able child, but also with outstanding ability however it manifests itself, even if restricted to a narrow range of study or activity.

Testing

Testing alone cannot be relied on to identify the most able. However, it is a very useful way of comparing children's performance with those of a similar age and identifying those pupils whose high achievement demonstrates outstanding ability.

SATs are a useful indicator, which can be used to identify, say, the most successful 10% of children. It is worth remembering that children who are outstandingly divergent thinkers are likely to be able to think of ingenious alternative solutions, which could put them at a disadvantage in standardised tests. They may therefore score at a lower level than less imaginative children.

All tests are really measures of achievement rather than of potential, but some are intended to indicate potential rather than mastery of school-based subjects. In really exceptional cases, schools may wish to turn to an educational psychologist who can administer an individual assessment of this sort. Such means cannot be used to identify a whole cohort of pupils with outstanding ability.

Children's Work

The ability of some able and talented children is easily identifiable through the quality of their work or their response to activities.

However, some children do not respond well to the school setting and, for a variety of reasons, do not show what they are capable of through the work that they are asked to produce.

Peer Nomination

Children are themselves often very pragmatically aware of the high ability in specific areas of learning which their fellow-pupils have. Use of peer nomination can therefore serve as a useful adjunct to other forms of identification.

However, great care needs to be taken in how such an approach to identification is presented. While children are very honest in their appraisal of each other's capabilities, their answers to direct questions about their judgements may be

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

affected by other considerations - such as wishing to be kind to friends. Questions need to be asked in a way which does not stress categorisation, but the kind of practical situation in which their judgements will have been formed.

For example, "If you needed to get someone in your class to do a really lifelike drawing of something really difficult, who would you choose?"

Discussions with children

Teachers who create opportunities to talk with their pupils individually or in small groups will have formed an intuitive awareness of those who think perceptively, reflectively and evaluatively about their experience. This could come about through the day-to-day work they do and their insights into a wide range of subject matter, including current affairs and personal lifestyle. This may sometimes reveal them as more able children, whose performance in other ways does not mark them out.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

Enrichment or Extension or Acceleration

Enrichment consists of providing extra materials at a deeper or more complex level, or providing challenging questions, which help further pupils understanding of a topic or subject. An advantage for the pupil is that he or she stays with their teaching group. A disadvantage is that enrichment activities may be time consuming and self-absorbing. Enrichment gives a horizontal flexibility to the curriculum. It is a supplement, but not a replacement, to the core of work to be covered. Enrichment activities can be provided outside the classroom through after school events/weekend activities.

Extension consists of enabling pupils to move through the curriculum at a faster rate than normal. This may mean that some core work has to be compressed or compacted or even missed out. Extension gives vertical flexibility to the curriculum. An advantage for the pupil is that he or she can make rapid progress. A disadvantage is that at transition/transfer a pupil may find that repetition of previously covered extension work occurs. Detailed record keeping becomes an essential part of extension work for teachers. A recommended technique is the must/should/could do approach to planning. There are many published approaches to extension work to the National Curriculum of which Smith's (1996) "Accelerated Learning in the Classroom" is particularly helpful.

Acceleration is used rarely in schools in England at the present time. Acceleration in this sense means taking pupils ahead of their year group to be taught with older pupils.

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

The Gifted and Talented classroom - quick checklist

Classroom climate

- ✓ How have you established a culture in which wrong answers are productive opportunities for learning (happy accidents), and in which creative thinking is actively encouraged?
- ✓ How are you modelling the process of talking about how learning takes place, rather than just what is learned?
- ✓ How have you helped learners with the language needed to discuss the process of their learning?
- ✓ Have you asked gifted and talented learners what helps them to learn effectively? What have you done to ensure you respond to what you have learnt from them?
- ✓ How have you helped learners become more aware of their preferred learning styles?
- ✓ Do you provide significant opportunities for them to practise learning styles that they find more difficult?
- ✓ How are you developing and maintaining a classroom or school code of achievement?

Questions and challenge

- ✓ How often do you encourage creative thinking by asking open-ended questions to which there are no right answers?
- ✓ How often are learners encouraged to consider the nature of a question and its possible answers? For example, do they consider when answers can be absolute whilst learning to appreciate the provisional nature of much knowledge?
- ✓ How often do you encourage learners to ask questions of themselves, each other and other adults in the classroom?
- ✓ How are learners involved in self-assessment and/or peer assessment?
- ✓ How effectively are the processes of formative assessment developed? (For more information on this, see [Assessment](#))
- ✓ How do you ensure that examples of gifted and talented work are on display or readily available, to raise the expectations of both learners and teachers?
- ✓ How effectively are you engaging learners in recognising and responding to challenge and taking initiative in their learning?

Beaver Road Primary School

Gifted and Talented

Planning and resources

- ✓ How thoroughly have you checked learning activities to make sure that they offer challenges that match higher level descriptions than expected for the key stage and/or the exceptional performance criteria of the national curriculum?
- ✓ How effectively are you involving teaching assistants, supply teachers, trainers or workplace supervisors in the identification of, and provision for, the gifted and talented?
- ✓ How effectively are you liaising with the schools' library service or other local resource support services?
- ✓ How are you developing a resource collection, including lists of web resources for young people and staff in classrooms, departments, the staff room, library or resource centre? How are you making sure that resources are being used?