

Policy for More Able Children (MAC)

Rational

Our school values all children equally and endeavours to ensure that each child should have the opportunity to realise his/her potential in a challenging and supportive environment.

Our school will have, at any time, a number of able, talented or gifted pupils, some of whom may perform at a level that exceeds the level of others in their class or that expected for children in their age group. This may be in one or more areas of learning, skill or ability.

We believe that we can make a difference in enabling these pupils to achieve the greatest possible progress and recognise the value and importance of identifying and celebrating their achievements and successes. Research has shown that by making provision for able and more able pupils, the standards of achievement are raised for all pupils.

Our definition of ability recognises academic and practical performance as well as those who show artistic, musical and creative talent, physical skills, leadership qualities and the ability to process ideas and information. It also recognises that a child may possess this potential although performance may not currently reflect this.

Aims

The aim of this document is to ensure a consistent approach to the identification and support of the more able learner through:

- To ensure that every learner, parent and member of staff can make a positive contribution in an environment in which they are kept and feel safe and valued through the promotion of health, achievement and enjoyment.
- An agreed, shared definition of the term "more able child"
- Identification of more able pupils as early as possible
- Substantiating identification by the use of objective assessment measures
- Meeting pupils' needs with a range of appropriate strategies
- Raising staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them
- Providing access to a suitably differentiated and challenging curriculum and learning environment.
- An emphasis on creating opportunities for pupils to identify their abilities and to flourish
- Fostering a culture of achievement by creating a climate of learning, excellence and celebration throughout the school
- Promoting opportunities for disadvantaged learners
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to help them promote children's learning and development
- Making use of links with other schools and the wider community to enhance learning opportunities
- Appointing More Able Co-ordinator

Terms

In these guidelines the term More Able refers to learners who perform, or who are potentially able to perform at levels significantly higher than their peers.

Definitions

Those pupils who demonstrate in one or more areas, abilities which place them into the highest achieving 20% of our school population and would benefit from an effective and planned differentiated programme.

At 9 yrs and above children who are achieving within or better than NC Level 1

At 7 yrs and above children who are achieving within or better than P Level 7

At 5 yrs and above children who are achieving within or better than P Level 6

A small minority, less than 5% of our school population may be considered as “**exceptionally able**”. These children need specific plans to enable their needs to be met. Effective provision will involve their Individual Education Plan to clearly identify the areas where the pupils need specific teaching, high expectations, increased differentiation and support and possibly mainstream learning opportunities.

Underachievement is a discrepancy between a pupil’s school performance and some index of his or her actual ability e.g. a failure in terms of progress and/or quality of work may be an indicator. Underachievers can be difficult to identify and so staff are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Head Teacher any child who is perceived as ‘failing to flourish’. The child’s needs may then be reviewed collectively and a ‘whole school’ approach adopted.

Identification

There is a wide range of identification strategies available. It is important to note that no single process is perfect or should be used in isolation. The identification process needs to be ongoing.

Identification is usually made by:

- Teacher nomination
- Reports from previous schools
- Test results/teacher assessments
- Pupil's work
- Checklists of characteristics - generic and subject-specific
- Parental information
- Peer/self nomination
- Information provided by external agencies (e.g. sports organisations, music tutors, etc)

Assessment methods

- Teacher observation
- Benchmark tests/assessments – B’Squared
- (Cognitive Abilities Tests)
- In-house subject tests or assessments
- Response to increased challenge
- Provision of opportunity
- Response from external agency
- Once identified the class teacher will work alongside the More Able Co-ordinator to validate this nomination with assessment data. If agreed that the criteria are met, the child will be

recognised as 'more able'. This information will then be used to inform whole school organisation and the child's IEP. Parents/carers and support agencies may be invited to the school to discuss ways in which the child's needs can be met and how they can be supported.

Practice

The class teacher will:

- Take steps to identify more able learners within their class as soon as possible
- Assess/gather data to support the nomination
- Liaise with the More Able Co-ordinator, parents/carers and support agencies throughout the time the pupil is in their class
- Agree, plan and implement appropriate provision
- Record strategies to be used
- Include provision in medium & short term plans, as appropriate
- Review provision regularly

It is the role of More Able Co-ordinator to:

- Liaise with class teachers
- Make the teacher aware of the assessment data required
- Collate the assessment materials and results
- Work with the teacher to support the pupil and plan provision
- Contact parents and keep them informed
- Ensure that the needs of all MAC children feature in school planning and organisation
- Work with all parties to decide upon the strategies to be used to maximise learning and development
- Liaise with and arrange other agency referrals as appropriate
- Act as/ appoint a mentor if appropriate
- Review provision on a regular basis
- Liaise with the Head Teacher
- Review the effectiveness of the policy

Provision

Provision Within School

Where a child is more able in one or more particular areas, they will be supported with high expectations and planning within the classroom and outside to enable them to pursue work at their own level. Teachers should seek to use a variety of techniques and strategies to provide for the more able child.

Planning for the more able child:

- Identifying provision for able pupils in subject policies and plans
- Identifying clear stages of development in schemes of work
- Planning a differentiated curriculum with a balance of whole class, group and individual teaching
- Restructuring class organisation or pupil grouping
- Setting homework/activities
- Differentiation through pace, task, dialogue, support, outcome, resource, content and/or responsibility

- Planning a variety of extension and enrichment activities

Challenging the more able child:

- Provide alternative learning environments
- Identify and deliver learning to suit preferred learning styles
- Create mainstream opportunities
- Problem solving and investigation to develop reasoning and thinking skills
- Use and model open-ended questions and tasks
- Introduce elements of competition within and outside peer group
- Competition against self through target setting
- Opportunities for creative and productive thinking

Extending and enriching the curriculum:

- Visiting experts and range of materials and resources
- Visits/workshops from poets, writers, artists, actors, dancers etc.
- Increased technical and specialist language
- Use of subject specialists
- Mentoring by either a similarly talented or suitable encouraging adult
- Use of additional support, TA's, other adults, older pupils and parents for one to one or group work to extend child in a specific area (social or academic)
- Links with outside agencies (music tuition, sports coaches, etc.)
- Clubs at lunchtime or after school, covering academic as well as other activities
- Participation in special competitions
- Enrichment sessions during the school day
- Cluster activities with other schools
- Consideration of the enrichment activities provided by outside associations and organisations (cubs, brownies, after school clubs)

Provision outside School

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

- Subject specialists
- Visiting experts
- School library service
- Specialist clubs and societies
- National Associations
- The Internet

Continuity and Progression

- Information on more able learners is provided on transfer between classes
- Information on more able learners is provided on transfer between schools

Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation

Pupil achievements will be monitored and evaluated against set individual targets. This process will include:

- Regular observation and recording of progress across the curriculum
- Encouraging pupils to assess and review their own performance

- Valuing out of school achievements
- Intervention activities to prevent underachievement.

Responsibilities

- The MAC Co-ordinators for our school are Sammi Kirkby and Sheila Frost
- A named governor has responsibility to ensure that MAC is always on the agenda for teaching, learning and school management.
- Every member of staff will ensure that all activities for learners are sufficiently extended to meet the needs of the more able child
- Holding activities will only be used in behaviour management contexts

Continuing Professional Development

- Regular training for MAC Co-ordinators and Governor
- Appropriate in-service for all staff
- Involvement in cluster co-ordinator meetings and training initiatives
- Seek to identify a G&T Special School network

Process for Development and Review

- Our commitment to support more able learners is reflected in our School Development Plan
- This policy and the success of the school's provision for the more able child will be reviewed annually by the More Able Co-ordinators/Headteacher/ Governor
- Planning the new model for each academic year will be informed by the needs of those children identified as being more able.

Reviewed April 2008