



Staplehurst School

Academically More Able & Talented Policy

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Document History

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1.1	December 2011	Document reviewed & updated	Alina Reid Gifted & Talented Co-ordinator
1.2	March 2014	New policy based on LCP template	Tonianne Wrightson, Inclusion Manager
1.3	March 2016	Document reviewed and updated.	Sarah Friend, Deputy Head



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(This policy is to be read in conjunction with the policies on Inclusion and Teaching & Learning.)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Our school strives to make the best possible provision for pupils of all abilities. We plan our teaching and learning so that each child can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement. The purpose of this policy is to help to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as “academically more able” and/or “talented” according to national guidelines. Academically more able and talented learners are defined as those children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with potential to develop those abilities).
- 1.2 Children who are classified as either academically more able or talented have the following characteristics:
- “academically more able” refers to a child who has a broad range of achievement at a level well above average, typically in the more academic subjects;
- “talented” refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields, typically those that call for performance skills, such as sport or music, but who does not necessarily perform at a high level across all areas of learning.
- 1.3 We are well aware that there will be academically more able and talented children in almost all classes. We will make provision for these children within the normal class teaching, but sometimes we will provide enrichment or extension activities to promote their skills and talents still further.
- 1.4 While we recognise and cater for these particular categories of children in our school, at the same time, we respect the right of all children, irrespective of differences in ability, to access various areas of learning, both for their self-fulfilment, and for their eventual development into active and responsible adults. In our mission statement, we declare accordingly that we value the individuality of all our children.

2 Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Our aims are to:
- ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all our children;
 - enable academically more able and talented children to develop to their full potential;
 - offer academically more able and talented children additional opportunities to generate their own learning;
 - ensure that we challenge academically more able and talented children appropriately and extend their learning through the work that we set them;
 - encourage these children to think and work independently.

3 Identification of academically more able and talented children

- 3.1 We use a range of strategies to identify academically more able and talented children. The identification process is ongoing, and begins when the child joins our school. Each child's pre-school record gives details of achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers enable us to add further details to these records.
- 3.2 Children undergo initial assessment within the first half-term of joining our reception class. This gives information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of



learning. We discuss each child's Early Years Foundation Stage profile with the parent or carer, and use this information when planning for individual needs.

- 3.3 As the children progress through the school, we assess them regularly to ensure that they are making the sort of progress that we are expecting of them in their personal targets.
- 3.4 The children are regularly assessed to inform their progress. These involve the statutory national tests as well as our own internal assessments. Teachers make regular assessments of each child's progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum. We compare the information from these tests with a range of national and LA data, in order to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress.
- 3.5 Each teacher regularly reviews the children's progress and maintains records of these judgements on Target Tracker. Teachers discuss the children's progress with parents and carers at the termly consultation evenings, and report annually on each child's progress in July.

4 Aptitudes in English and mathematics

- 4.1 Academically more able children in English are identified when they:
 - demonstrate relatively high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
 - use research skills more effectively to synthesise information;
 - enjoy reading, and respond to a range of texts at a more advanced level;
 - use a wider vocabulary, and enjoy working with words; speaking and listening
 - see issues from a broader range of perspectives;
 - use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion.
- 4.2 Academically more able children in mathematics are identified when they:
 - explore a broader range of strategies for solving a problem;
 - are more curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
 - see solutions more quickly, without needing to try all the options;
 - look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
 - work more flexibly, and establish their own strategies;
 - enjoy manipulating numbers.

5 Teaching and learning

- 5.1 Our teachers plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. We give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning, such as by providing:
 - a common activity that allows the children to respond at their own levels;
 - an enrichment activity that broadens a child's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
 - an individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
 - the opportunity for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning.
- 5.2 Children are familiarised with a variety of organisational strategies as they move through the school. These strategies can be used by all children, but give due scope to higher achievers.
- 5.3 Flexible groupings enable academically more able and talented pupils to have focused teaching designed to challenge them and enable them to make maximum progress in these core subjects. Teachers regularly review the progress of children, and children move between the groups as appropriate. This enables teachers to plan work that reflects the ability band of each group.



- 5.4 We offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children. These activities offer higher achievers the opportunity to extend further their learning in a range of activities. Opportunities include a range of sporting and musical clubs, and an after-school mathematics club.
- 5.5 Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in classes. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.
- 5.6 The children will also have the opportunity to experience a range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning.

6 Management strategies

- 6.1 The Inclusion Manager coordinates the provision and practice within the school for academically more able and talented children. The coordinator's role includes:
- running a register of academically more able and talented pupils, and keeping it up to date;
 - monitoring teachers' planning (with the assistance of the leaders) to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken across all curriculum areas by the higher achievers;
 - regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for these particular children;
 - monitoring their progress through termly discussions with teachers;
 - supporting staff in the identification of these children;
 - providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies;
 - liaising with parents and carers, governors and LA officers on related issues.

7 Monitoring and review

- 7.1 The governor with responsibility for inclusion issues monitors the school provision for academically more able and talented pupils. The governor will work with the school's academically more able and talented coordinator in support of the school's efforts to help these pupils to reach their full potential.
- 7.2 The coordinator for our provision for academically more able and talented pupils provides feedback to the governing body on an annual basis. The monitoring includes feedback from parents and carers and children, and termly monitoring of children's work.
- 7.3 The coordinator collects samples of work from the higher achievers, in order to demonstrate the standards that they are achieving. We use these examples to inform the process of identifying academically more able and talented children.
- 7.4 This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if necessary.

8 Equality

At Staplehurst School we remember that 'privilege brings opportunities'. Therefore, some children who are above average for academic or even creative subjects may only be so because they have been given the opportunity to develop these skills through having a more privileged background than other children in their year group. This may be because of social or economic reasons. Therefore, we must aim to offer the opportunity to broaden the knowledge and skills of all areas of the curriculum to all children in the school. Only through this will all the children have the chance to develop their true potential. The academically more able and talented children should not become an elite group within the school who are the only ones to have access to ways of expanding their prospective talents.