



**Gifted & Talented Policy – October 2008**

## **Gifted & Talented Policy**

### **1. Policy rationale and aims**

- How does the policy relate to the school's aims and values?
- Relationship with school development plan and departmental development plans.

### **2. The Definition of Gifted and Talented**

- Categories in which the gifted and talented may be found.

### **3. How do we identify gifted and talented pupils?**

- Which pupils are included and why?
- How does the school recognise them?
- What are the pupils' needs?

### **4. Matching teaching to pupils' needs**

- The learning culture
- Evaluating the learning environment

### **5. Managing the G&T provision**

- Coherence and consistency
- A whole school and Subject level approach
  - Developing an effective learning environment.
  - Differentiation
  - Appropriate learning - enrichment & extension
  - The importance of questioning.
  - The role of assessment
  - Differentiated homework

### **6. Arranging activities outside school**

- Enrichment days or residentials
- School clubs
- Giving students opportunities
- Collaboration with outside agencies.

### **7. Transfer and transition of Information**

### **8. Monitoring and Evaluating**

## 1. Policy Rationale and Aims

*Quintin Kynaston aims to develop the best in every student through the excellent teaching of a broad and challenging curriculum in a supportive and technologically advanced environment.*

P.92 School Handbook 2005-2006

We value our students as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical growth and development through the teaching at Qk.

On the basis of these values, we should:

- Develop an understanding of students own characters, strengths and weaknesses
- Encourage students to develop self-respect and self-discipline
- Make responsible use of our students talents, rights and opportunities
- Take responsibility within our own teaching to ensure students achieve to the ability they are able

Each department should include a section on G&T in their departmental handbooks reflecting how they cater for Gifted and talented students within their curriculum area.

*Example below is from Drama Department handbook 2003-2004*

### 20. Gifted and Talented

Drama is a subject that is not specified in the National Curriculum but is one that successfully develops skills that enhance all subjects within a school. Students who lie in the realms of the gifted and talented in Drama are pushed and developed in different ways to other subjects. Due to the nature of the subject and the practical basis of it, worksheets are not the common springboard for students to express their talents. In drama, students show their *gifts and talents* through working in groups, creative flair, understanding, spontaneity, use of imagination and performance or even how they use technical language in oral or written responses.

In Drama, students are encouraged to do all the above. The students who exceed in these areas are what we would deem as talented. The students who are identified are encouraged through progression of work, through extra activities, different groupings, praise and encouragement and extension activities to improve what they have already achieved. Our teaching changes and differentiates to enhance these students work so they get the most out of the lesson, also to improve their own knowledge and skills.

Half-termly assessments take place within our department to ensure that we understand student's educational growth within performance and academic attainment and it also helps us define who needs more encouragement to fulfil their potential.

*As a department we believe in:*

**1. Inspiration:** Everyone is inspired by something. It's inspiration that drives us to achieve our dreams and make the best of ourselves in a world that is fraught with uncertainty. A child or young person may never be aware of what inspires them unless they are given the chance to explore for themselves and identify the fact that they too can be inspired.

**2. Creativity:** It is every child's right to be given an opportunity to express themselves creatively. Creative outlets can help unlock some of the major problems that children are facing at school such as low self-esteem, lack of confidence and confusion over identity. By helping to develop a sense of worth in children through the arts, creative activities not only stimulate learning but also promote a strong awareness of self and citizenship.

**3. Opportunity:** By providing a platform for children and young people to work with leading arts organisations, practitioners, directors and film makers, we offer them the opportunity to learn unique skills, giving them the chance to aspire to greater things.

**4. Achievement:** Part of personal growth is the recognition one gets for working hard, pushing back boundaries and overcoming new challenges. This gives the achiever a sense of well being and contentment that drives them to want to do better and work even harder!

## **2. The Definition of Gifted and Talented**

There are many definitions of gifted and talented. This guidance builds on the work of Excellence in Cities (EiC), which identifies:

- **'Gifted'** pupils as those who have abilities in one or more subjects in the statutory school curriculum.
- **'Talented'** pupils as those who have abilities in art and design, music, PE, or in sports or performing/expressive arts such as dance and drama.

Therefore the pupil who is an all-rounder will be gifted and talented. Students who display an area of outstanding achievement in one area but not in another could be "Gifted" or "Talented". This guidance uses the phrase 'gifted and talented' to describe all pupils with gifts and talents.

### **Characteristics to look out for:**

Gifted and talented pupils are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. However, they are more likely than most pupils to:

- think quickly and accurately
- work systematically
- generate creative working solutions
- work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations
- communicate their thoughts and ideas well
- be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns
- achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts
- be particularly creative
- show great sensitivity or empathy
- demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill
- make sound judgements
- be outstanding leaders or team members
- be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum
- demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspects of work.

Some gifted and talented pupils do well in statutory national curriculum tests (including the extension tests) and in world-class tests. However, as the list above suggests, being gifted and talented covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations; for example, pupils may demonstrate leadership qualities or a capacity for creative thought.

It is important to recognise that not all gifted and talented pupils are obvious achievers. Many actually underachieve -- their potential is masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem, lack of challenge, and low teacher/parent expectations. To enable these pupils to fulfil their potential, it is vital to give everyone in a school the opportunity to excel.

### **3. How do We Identify Gifted and Talented Pupils?**

How well we as a school identify gifted and talented pupils will depend to some extent on the range of learning opportunities that we offer. Pupils can only demonstrate their abilities if they are given an opportunity to do so.

Teachers will probably beware of pupils' particular gifts and talents as a result of:

- **Talking** to parents, carers and peers
- Observing how pupils approach routine work in class and activities outside the classroom (some children behave quite differently in the two situations);
- **Observing** them systematically in a range of learning contexts, to identify those who demonstrate social or leadership skills, an aptitude for problem-solving or acute listening skills
- Observing pupils' responses to their work and talking with them about what they like, dislike, and what enables them to learn best
- **Tracking** pupils
- Observing whether they take the initiative in tackling tasks or adapting conditions to suit circumstances
- **Judging** the progress they make in national curriculum subjects and whether they are beyond the level of attainment expected for their age
- **Monitoring** pupils' performance in national curriculum and other standardised tests, for example non-verbal reasoning tests and cognitive ability tests (CATs)
- Talking to form tutors (at secondary level), who see pupils in a range of contexts and know about their circumstances

The aptitudes of pupils for whom English is an additional language is often best recognised by people who can speak to them in their native language.

### **Avoid stereotyping**

- It is important that we make sure that the full range of the school population is considered when identifying gifted and talented pupils. As teachers we need to guard against stereotypes of our perceptions of gifted and talented pupils.
- We should check that the pupils identified as gifted and talented are broadly representative of pupils as a whole within our school; any significant disparity might suggest that some pupils have been overlooked. If this is the case, procedures for identifying gifted and talented pupils will be carefully scrutinised.
- Ofsted has reported a tendency for some schools to identify a disproportionate number of gifted and talented pupils in economically favoured groups. (Provision for very able pupils - Ofsted, 1997)

## **4. Matching Teaching To Pupils' Needs**

## **Developing an effective learning environment**

Like all pupils, gifted and talented pupils need frequent opportunities to apply their skills and understanding, and to develop their knowledge, within a secure and flexible learning environment.

The learning culture should:

- be pupil-centred, valuing pupils' own interests and learning styles
- encourage independence and autonomy, and support pupils in using their initiative
- encourage pupils to be open to ideas and initiatives presented by others
- be unconstrained by subject boundaries or established conventions
- encourage the use of a variety of resources, ideas, methods and tasks
- involve pupils in working in a range of settings and combinations - as individuals, in pairs, in groups, as a class, cross-year, cross-school and inter-school
- encourage pupils to reflect on the process of their own learning and to understand the factors that help them to make progress

## **Evaluating the learning environment**

Teachers can use this checklist to help them consider the effectiveness of the learning environment for gifted and talented pupils:

- Have you asked gifted and talented pupils what helps them to learn effectively? What have you done to ensure you meet their needs?
- How have you helped pupils become more aware of their preferred learning styles?
- How have you helped pupils with the language needed to discuss the process of their learning?
- 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 often do you encourage creative thinking by asking open-ended questions to which there are no right answers?
- How much do you encourage pupils to ask questions of themselves, each other and other adults in the classroom?
- How are pupils involved in self-assessment and/or peer assessment?
- How effectively are the processes of formative assessment developed?
- How are you developing and maintaining a classroom or school code of achievement?
- How do you encourage pupils through challenging and interactive displays? How do you ensure that examples of gifted and talented pupils' work are on display or readily available, to raise the expectations of both pupils and teachers?
- How effectively are you involving teaching assistants and supply teachers in the identification of, and provision for, gifted and talented pupils? (\*Ofsted are really hot on this!)
- How thoroughly have you checked work to make sure that it offers challenges that match higher level descriptions than expected for the key stage and/or the exceptional performance criteria of the national curriculum?
- How are you developing a resource collection, including lists of web resources, for pupils and staff in classrooms, departments, the staff room, library or resource centre? How are you making sure that resources are being used?

## **5. Managing The G&T Provision**

## **A holistic approach**

It is vital that a school's provision for gifted and talented pupils is coherent and consistent:

- across subjects
- across year groups
- for each individual gifted and talented pupil

This coherence needs to be clear to staff, parents and pupils.

At least once a year G&T students in Key Stage 3 / Key Stage 4 are invited to attend a residential that allows them opportunities to develop skills and enjoy challenging experiences.

Each faculty contributes to a booklet that outlines the activities that are available for G&T students. This booklet is available from the G&T coordinators.

At the whole-school level:

- The different threads of provision for gifted and talented pupils - including teaching and learning, pastoral support and community links - should take a coherent approach
- Study support must complement classroom provision effectively; it should not simply be a bolted-on extra that bears no relationship to the curriculum that gifted and talented pupils follow in school
- Acceleration, extension and enrichment should be planned coherently across the school and within subject areas

We must differentiate our lesson plans to cater for G&T students to ensure maximum learning is taking place they should include stretching activities and differentiated homework.

At a subject level:

As a secondary school we must ensure that different departments are consistent in their provision for gifted and talented pupils. Some subjects lend themselves more easily to approaches such as acceleration, and some allowances may need to be made for local needs and circumstances.

The Government's view is that acceleration; extension and enrichment all have their part to play in gifted and talented provision, but that pupils are likely to access them in different combinations, according to their abilities and needs. It is important that the approach to acceleration, extension and enrichment is coherent for each pupil, and that other dimensions of provision (such as curricular flexibility) are taken into account so that the pupil's overall teaching and learning package makes sense.

All of this needs to be done with an eye to a pupil's progress throughout the school and beyond. So if acceleration is part of the package in year 10, the consequences for year 11 and beyond need to be planned as part of the pupil's broader teaching and learning provision.

## **6. Arranging Activities Outside School**

Our School can encourage a range of activities for gifted and talented pupils outside the school, and through our departmental areas including:

- Summer schools
- Workshops
- Revision Classes
- School Trips
- Professionals invited in to work within the classroom
- Master classes
- Preparation should include detailed arrangements for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress and attainment after taking part in programmes outside school. Parents should be involved as much as possible in this monitoring and evaluation.
- Residential
- Parent / Carer meetings

Most of these can be curriculum linked however many of the above work just as well as standalone opportunities as an encouragement and revitalisation of learning.

## **7. Transfer and Transition of Information**

It is really important that we continue the support and encouragement these students have, we therefore must enforce effective recording and communication systems, so that as far as possible, teachers are aware at the start of each year of:

- the levels of achievement and potential of all the pupils they are going to teach
- work already covered
- work that needs to be planned for

Good communication between teachers of different classes, and from year to year within a school, is essential if suitable provision is to be made for gifted and talented pupils. The information shared at point of transfer within departments and within the school should include details of a pupil's:

- Preferred learning styles
- Particular strengths and weaknesses
- Displays of resourcefulness and initiative
- Work covered
- Targets for further development

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

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluating**

We should consider the following questions when evaluating the effectiveness of our provision for gifted and talented pupils and its impact on the attainment of the school and the achievement of the students;

- How are the statements of expectations that are described in the whole -school and subject policies for gifted and talented pupils used as indicators of effectiveness against which monitoring and evaluation can take place?
- How effective are systems for celebrating pupil achievement?
- How are parents and carers made aware of the school's gifted and talented policy?
- How are teachers and pupils supported in setting the highest expectations of achievement?
- How are new staff inducted in policy and practice?
- How is provision for gifted and talented pupils integrated into performance management, school target-setting, assessment, planning and analysis?