

St. Mary's Church in Wales School, Ruabon
More Able and Talented Policy

Definition of More Able and Talented

In Wales, we will use the term 'more able and talented' to describe pupils who require opportunities for enrichment and extension that go beyond those provided for the general cohort of pupils. More able pupils, given extended opportunities, will not only discover but also develop their talents. The term 'more able and talented' encompasses pupils who are more able across the curriculum as well as those who show talent in one or more specific areas. In general terms, approximately 20 per cent of the school population may be more able, while the top 2 per cent could be considered exceptionally able.

The More Able and Talented (MAT) Co-ordinator at St. Mary's School, Mrs. L Perrins, has compiled this policy in keeping with the MAT guidelines as provided by Wrexham Council. The policy has been edited in consultation with the Headteacher, Staff and Governors. All members of staff will be required to implement this policy. It will be reviewed in line with our cycle of improvement.

Our school will have, at any time, a number of more able and talented pupils, some of whom may perform at a level that well 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. Their performance will exceed that of above-average attainers and sometimes that of children described as well above average for their age.

We recognise that children may have exceptional talents in one or more areas of the curriculum whether it be academic, practical, creative, musical, physical, sporting and social performance. It also recognises that a child may possess this potential although performance may not currently reflect this.

We believe that provision is generally most effective when it is made within the classroom, through a stimulating, differentiated curriculum. We also recognise that in some cases, particularly with pupils talented in physical education and sport, music and performance that we need to work with external partners to meet their needs.

Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of this policy are to ensure a consistent approach to the identification and support of the more able or talented child through:

- an agreed, shared definition of the terms, "talented" & "more able"
- Identification of the talented or more able pupils as early as possible
- Meeting pupils' needs with a range of appropriate strategies and ensuring they develop their full potential

- Raising staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them
- Create a climate of 'out of the box' learning throughout the school, offer children opportunities to generate their own learning and encourage children to think and work independently
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to enhance learning opportunities
- Making use of the wider community to enhance learning opportunities.
- Use appropriate assessment of children's abilities and needs
- Link with other agencies that may help the development of identified children

The Role of the MAT Co-ordinator

The role of the MATCo is filled by Mrs L Perrins who oversees the day-to-day implementation of the School's MAT policy. This includes establishing and maintaining a MAT Register and ensuring that children on the MAT register are provided for within the classroom environment with opportunities that stimulate and stretch them to achieve their maximum potential and to be exceptional. It is also within the role of the MATCo to:

- Liaise with class teachers to arrange suitable identification methods and support them in the identification of MAT pupils
- Make the teacher aware of the assessment data required
- Collate the assessment materials and results
- Work with the teacher to support the pupils
- Monitor teacher's planning to ensure suitable tasks and activities are being planned for the MAT children across all curriculum areas
- Work with all parties to decide upon the strategies to be used to maximize learning and development
- Liaise with and arrange other agency referrals as appropriate
- Review provision on a regular basis
- Liaise with the Head Teacher and Link Governor
- Review the effectiveness of the policy

St. Mary's Ruabon, Definition of More Able and Talented Pupils

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;
- see issues from a broader range of perspectives;

- use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

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.

Identification of More Able and Talented Pupils

A more able and talented pupil should be identified using a variety of methods. The specific procedure will vary according to subject area but will include elements of the following:

- **Teacher nomination**

Judgments will be based on analysis of information from nursery schools, previous teachers, interaction with children, parents and professionals, on-going assessment, record keeping, pupils work, collation of evidence and a range of formal and informal tests.

- **Assessment results**

These can be used to support other methods of identification. This may include the child's individual profile, with age related expectations as further evidence, or any form of previous record on the child.

- **Peer nomination**

Children are quick to recognise ability in others and so it is part of our inclusive philosophy to listen to the views of children about children when they are offered.

- **Parental nomination**

The opinions of parents are highly valued and will be taken into consideration but will not be the sole method of identification. All parents consider their child to be special and believe that s/he is displaying exceptional ability but the school often recognises that ability to be similar to that displayed by many other children.

- **Specialist teacher / agency identification**

E.g. Clubs, National Governing Bodies of Sport. Sports Clubs, Music Teachers, Art Council, Sunday School Teachers.

- **Self-nomination**

- **Provision**

By building challenge into our provision across the whole school (not just curriculum areas), more able and talented children are likely to be identified.

Once identified the class teacher will work alongside the More Able and Talented Co-ordinator to validate this nomination with assessment data. If agreed that the criteria are met, the child's name is entered in the register. During parent consultations there is discussion of the ways in which the child's needs can be met and how they can be supported. Pupils who have been identified and nominated by an outside agency (e.g. sport) may require the coach/talent development officer to be present at such a meeting.

Provision for the More Able and Talented

Classroom Level

We understand and acknowledge the importance of establishing what prior knowledge, understanding and skills children have to avoid unnecessary repetition of work, which is extremely de-motivating.

We try to raise the profile of achievement. We are alert to the "bright but ..." child who could achieve better results if motivated and challenged.

Finally, we endeavour to not to slip into assumptions that more able and talented children are easier to teach than other children.

The following strategies are employed where appropriate:

- varied and flexible groupings
- differentiation by task, including homework
- differentiation by outcome
- access to higher tier assessment papers/ activities
- setting individual targets
- extension and open-ended activities
- use of key questions
- provision of challenging activities across the whole curriculum, including problem solving and investigation
- guidance is sought from the LA Learning Advisor and Secondary School Subject Co-ordinators where appropriate
- where a child is deemed to be exceptionally able then an Individual Learning Plan will be formulated.

And most importantly:

- encouraging all children to become independent learners and organise their own work
- carrying out unaided tasks which stretch their capabilities
- making choices about their work
- developing the ability to evaluate their own work and so become self critical

Whole School Level

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are being built into all aspects of our school provision.

We aim to:

- create an ethos where it is ok to be bright
- encourage all children to be independent learners
- be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender and social circumstances on learning and high achievements
- hold high expectations
- use a variety of strategies including:
 - planning for and allowing children to work alongside a different year group
 - giving children opportunities to serve on various working parties
 - recognising achievement
 - participation in projects linked to local secondary schools
 - recognition of more able and talented within our additional needs provision
 - establishing a more able and talented register
 - identifying characteristics within subject areas which might indicate more able and talented abilities.