



More Able & Talented Policy

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is central to our school's plans, policies, practice and ethos. As a Rights Respecting School we teach about children's rights and also model rights and respect in all relationships - linked to Article 19 (the Convention on the Rights of the Child)

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED PUPILS

Definition: Children who need more opportunity to enrich and extend their abilities than is provided to most pupils. The term encompasses pupils who are more capable in all areas of the curriculum as well as those who demonstrate talent in one or more specific areas.

The usual concept of 'More Able and Talented' according to educational psychology is limited to a much smaller percentage of children – possibly as low as 2%. The 20% figure must therefore be seen as having to include those pupils previously designated as bright/capable and many of these children do not require special attention in the broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum provided by Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin.

Much of this policy can therefore be seen as specifically applying to the top 2% of the school pupil population and their parents and teachers. The following criteria can be used to distinguish the bright/capable child from the truly gifted or talented child:

Bright Child	A More Able and Talented Child
Interested	Very Curious
Usually with good ideas	Always with good ideas and sometimes lateral ideas that can seem at first to be stupid ones.
Know most of the answers	Knows most of the answers and starts asking questions
Answers questions appropriately	Asks questions but then begins to elaborate
Repeated repetition required for mastering a skill	There are only one or two repetitions needed for mastering
Understanding ideas	Developing ideas
Enjoys peer company	More fond of adult company
Copies correctly	Creating original work and designs
Technician/operator	Creator/inventor
Absorbing information	Information handling
Can remember well	Can remember well and assume intelligently
Comments on how things work Satisfied with the work he does	Extremely insightful Very self-critical and sets extremely high standards.

Enjoys immediate problems	Thrives on complexity
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The More Able and Talented pupil:

- asks many questions and learns faster and easier than others;
- possesses a very quick memory and summoning powers;
- demonstrates a good ability to observe and reason, and to see relationships and generalizations from the few facts given;
- is an imaginative or creative thinker;
- is a very good independent worker;
- is very curious and able to focus for long periods on topics of interest;
- is good at seeing, making, drawing, building or designing although poor at speaking, listening and writing, i.e. they are gifted with 'visual-spatial' skills and can demonstrate exceptional mechanical and artistic ingenuity. Eye coordination and a good hand are indicative of this range of skills;
- enjoys problem solving, often omits the intermediate clauses in an argument and make original interconnections;
- is far ahead in mathematics, particularly problem solving, possesses an extraordinary imagination that can be manifested in how he/she responds to questions;
- possesses extraordinary strength of will and purpose;
- has a wide range of interests and general knowledge and a very good vocabulary and is often beyond what is expected of his/her age;
- shows strong feelings and opinions;
- can have a good but probing or remarkable sense of humour;
- sets high standards and is a perfectionist and obsessive about accuracy;
- pursues interests (often associated with older children or adults) with great enthusiasm that sometimes verges on obsession;
- he/she often prefers games associated with older children or adults;
- he/she often wants to spend time with older children and adults;
- is morally, socially and ethically gifted with a mature sense of the implications of actions or situations. This can manifest itself as a high level of sensitivity and empathy for others;
- he/she can appear very arrogant and yet sensitive to what they see as being put in their place;
- appears extroverted or introverted within a peer group;
- can demonstrate the characteristics of a leader.

Our objective is to:

- Encourage all pupils to recognise and reach their true potential, i.e. have a positive approach to lifelong learning and be able to demonstrate initiative.
- To reach this goal it is necessary to identify the true nature and potential of a More Able and Talented child before proper provision can be made. However, it is not easy to identify every gifted and talented child. For the purpose of identifying and assisting them, more able and talented pupils can be grouped as follows : -
 - Generally talented - excelling in everything he does and enjoying their success - easy to spot.
 - Talented possess a special ability in one field, e.g. mathematics or science, are relatively easily identifiable as they also tend to be capable and successful academically.
 - Rebellious talent - possessing a range of behavioural problems which appear to be disruptive and underachieving - are often incorrectly designated as being completely disruptive and/or of low ability.
 - Creatively gifted, intense thinkers who are often unpopular with their peers due to the perceived lack of social skills and common traits are often incorrectly denounced as restless.
 - Hidden talented - underachievers who don't want to be different from their peers and such they melt into their peer group – often incorrectly denounced as underachieving or simply less capable.

Environmental and hereditary factors influence the expression of ability and high achievement. With the true support of parents and the school, most children will develop self-confidence and will strive to achieve their innate potential.

The aims of the school are:

- ensuring that school policy includes a focus on the needs of More Able and Talented children;
- develop whole school strategies to identify, educate and support the More Able and Talented in order to build their capacity for unrestricted learning and creative thinking;
- ensuring that these methods are used, or adapted in all classes / subjects / areas of learning and experience;
- ensuring there are clear roles and responsibilities for More Able and Talented children within school and LA with particular attention to the:
 - i. Senior Management Team (SMU);
 - ii. Designated teachers with specific responsibility for the More Able and Talented pupils, e.g the Additional Learning Needs Coordinator;
 - iii. Designated Governor with specific responsibility for the More Able and Talented pupils, namely Jonathan Williams, the member of the governing body with responsibility for ALN;

The Need for Early Identification:

Gifted children have a great appetite for knowledge and it is vital to identify this need as soon as possible so that parents and teachers can give them the level of support they need so they can develop their talents. Referring, assessing and designating More Able and Talented pupils can come from a variety of sources, e.g.

- application by teachers following observations, assessments or the use of checklists;
- a request from the pupil himself/herself;
- a request from a parent;
- peer group application;
- managers application;
- a GP application;
- following information from a previous school (e.g. nursery school);
- following the achievement of national testing;
- following diagnostic tests;
- following interviews, individual questionnaires;
- following evidence of out-of-school activities;
- following the tracking and observation of individual pupils.

Like many other children, More Able and Talented children can often fail to fulfill their potential and consequently have many difficulties. Early designation, assessment and provision is therefore very important for any able/talented child for the following reasons:

It can reduce the difficulties that can be encountered when intervention and provision occurs. Typically these difficulties are:

- low confidence and self-esteem;
- a high level of frustration and self-blame;
- poor study skills;
- social isolation and believing they are misunderstood and different from their peers;
- avoiding academic regimes;
- problems with concentration;
- living in their own little world.

The process begins by coordinating with the private nurseries / Cylchoedd Meithrin that feed us. The teacher responsible for the Nursery visits the nurseries and Cylchoedd Meithrin which feed us to meet potential pupils and teachers during the term before they transfer to primary school.

During the first term of school all reception pupils are assessed. The designation of pupils requiring support is based largely on the results of these assessments. Specific requests for support from various sources, including parents, teachers, etc., are also considered.

Enrichment and Expansion

- **Enrichment** : Ensuring that curriculum content is rich in quality
- **Expansion** : Ensuring that curriculum content extends and expands understanding and experience.

Teachers will ensure that More Able and Talented pupils are properly challenged, adjust the size and/or breadth and content of the tasks presented to them. Pupils have the opportunity to read, write and talk about their work and to participate in discussions and/or to work with other pupils.

Teachers will set targets and track progress in consultation with the ALNCo using a range of internal and statutory observations/ tests. Some pupils will receive support in the classroom and a small number will be taken out for more support in another area e.g language and maths.

Curriculum

There is no detailed, standard curriculum for more Able and Talented children, because their needs are very individual. The emphasis is on developing target-based work to:

- meet the needs of individual children;
- build on their individual strengths;
- encourage development in areas that need support.

For each pupil the school's curriculum is well structured, and incorporating differentiation ensures an environment in which they can thrive. However, it is crucial to remember that more able and talented children may be several years ahead of their peers academically but still be similar in their chronological age emotionally and socially.

Questionnaires

The child's voice is critical. Questionnaires are used to self-evaluate and ascertain information about how the child is learning.

Transition

We always ensure that More Able and Talented pupils are known to the schools they transfer to. It will be discussed with Ysgol Gyfun Gŵyr's transition co-ordinator identifying the strengths of the More Able and Talented child for facilitating effective transition and consistency of provision.

The Role of the Governors

- Ensure there is a focus on the More Able and Talented children in school.
- Ensure oversight and responsibility for providing for more able and talented children within the school and to ensure adequate resources.

- The appointment of a governor to take a special interest in More Able and Talented children demonstrates the priority given by the Governing Body to this area.
- The governor responsible for the More Able and Talented children in our school is Mr Jonathan Williams.
- Attend training on the education of More Able and Talented children.

Role of Headteacher/Senior Management Team

- Plan and manage effectively an approach to organisational excellence i.e. ensure that designated objectives are met against agreed parameters on quality, timeframe and cost. These objectives should address the needs of the individual and the school by setting and achieving specific targets in the school's development plan.
- Allocate a portion of the budget to the teaching and learning of More Able and Talented pupils.
- Assist in mapping and exploring skills and roles in the school and then to provide staff with an appropriate HMS and monitor performance.
- Revise the curriculum annually so that it retains continuity, development, breadth and balance.
- To have a role strategically in promoting cooperation and collaboration between departments and across the whole curriculum in terms of More Able and Talented children.
- Ensure that gifted and talented pupils are discussed at Staff/School Improvement meetings and that best practice and experiences are shared amongst staff.
- Initiate a school-wide policy of awards and recognition for outstanding work and/or progress. Public recognition of the work of More Able and Talented pupils should take place bearing in mind that some are very shy and introverted and that their self-confidence could be badly damaged if they have to go to the front to receive an award or credit.
- Improve parents' understanding of how they could support their child's education e.g by holding Skills Promotion evenings.

Teacher's Role

- All staff must be committed to improving provision for more able and talented children – and most importantly, all teaching staff must support each other and in turn, receive the support of the SMU.
- Assist in identifying and referring children who are More Able and Talented and in need of support for the Learning and Experience Area Leader, Subject Leader, Head of Department and/or ALNCo.
- Assess personal development needs in relation to professional development.
- Provide a range of learning opportunities and methods e.g whole class / group learning, one by one learning, learning on another site e.g the nature reserve.
- It is important to provide activities that use advanced thinking skills strategies e.g designing challenging open questions.
- Set tasks related to problem solving and thorough research.
- MAT children are allowed to skip practicing the basic skills they have mastered in order to focus on richer and wider learning.

- Systematic training of advanced reading skills, research skills and a range of recording/recording skills.
- Provide resources that require advanced reading and research skills. This is part and parcel of bilingual education. Skills such as bilingualism enhance their reading comprehension skills.
- Participate in making teaching more effective in terms of subject content and method of teaching thereby enriching the education of the pupil.
- Facilitate learning by using a range of appropriate and meaningful activities that involve pupils in the learning process.
- Help pupils make sense, and interpret information and events to process the experience and create knowledge.
- Set clear goals and communicate them to all pupils at the beginning of the lesson.
- Ensuring that More Able and Talented children have access to the curriculum by providing the situation where each pupil's experience of content and skills will match his/her learning scale and that alternative, differentiated learning materials and strategies are used.
- Discuss targets and strategies with the child who is recognised as a MAT child.

Role of Parents/Guardians

- Advise and share ideas / strategies with the parents so that they can support the child's education more effectively.
- Ensure effective parent-teacher communication to share information about the child's talents or special interests.

USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- Guidance for Schools on Provision for More Able and Talented Learners: October 2007 (Gwasanaeth Ysgolion a Dysgu Gydol Oes, Caerdydd)
- Developing higher-order literacy skills across the curriculum (Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru)
- Supporting learner's higher-order literacy skills (Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru)
- How to develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom (Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru)
- Why develop thinking and assessment for learning in the classroom? (Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru)

Policy Adoption

Date of Review by Governors: 27/6/23

Date Endorsed and ratified by Full Governing Body: 27/6/23

Chair of Governors Signature: