



Most Able and Talented children (MA&T) Policy

Review: the policy will be reviewed annually by Oaklands School governors.

Approved: Summer 2021

Next Review: Autumn 2022

Principles:

- Oaklands is committed to raising the achievement of all pupils
- Creating a classroom that creates bespoke challenges for our pupils will ensure that the more able are stretched and others are supported; creating equal opportunities for all to achieve their potential
- Children deserve to reach their potential and we know from experience that raising the achievement of the more able will raise the achievement of all pupils
- Our school ethos values and celebrates all forms of achievement
- Providing for and raising the attainment of MA&T students is the responsibility of ALL staff

Who are the able, gifted and talented?

This group of pupils is made up of the following:

Most Able - academically most able, (in at least one statutory curriculum subject) performing significantly above the level of their peers.

Able/Talented - showing ability or expertise in art, music, P.E., or any sport or creative art medium.

The Most Able & Talented Register

A register of MA&T pupils will be kept on the school network and is the responsibility of each individual subject leader and class teacher to maintain. The register is a collaborative document and any member of staff may put forward their case for a child to be included in a particular subject.

The MA&T coordinator will ensure that it is reviewed/updated on an annual basis, to acknowledge emerging ability and talent, in consultation with class teachers and phase leaders.

Identification

Pupils are identified through:

- outcomes of parent/guardian interview process
- analysis of ongoing work, formal and informal assessments (assessment data, optional tests, teacher assessment)
- teacher/phase leader identification through ongoing observations/progress meetings (see end of document for criteria for identifying potential MA&T)
- peer or self-nomination
- identification by outside agencies (e.g. after school dance, football clubs, etc).

Monitoring Progress:

- All class teachers are expected to monitor the progress of all pupils they teach including the MA&T,
- whole school progress checks for all students are carried out three times each year (after tracking info is completed) providing opportunities for monitoring progress across the core curriculum areas,
- using prior attainment data from KS1 (to predict potential grades at KS2) and monitoring pupil progress against this (use Fischer Family Trust data),
- outcomes of pupil work,
- annual review of Most Able and Talented Register,
- pupil perceptions and responses in the form of questionnaires and discussions,
- monitoring of pupil achievement will be co-ordinated by the Most Able and Talented Co-ordinator in conjunction with phase leaders/class teachers (through ongoing subject based assessments).

Effective Practice and Strategies for Raising the Achievement of more able pupils:

- Whole school organisation ensuring MA& T is a priority within the school development plan,
- a Most Able & Talented co-ordinator and a designated **senior** member of staff with overall responsibility for the most able,
- determining pupil groups on the basis of what best supports pupil achievement in each subject rather than on any particular philosophical position,
- continuing the embedding of thinking tools in the curriculum as a recognised method for raising standards,
- staff CPD of current pedagogy

Raising Teacher and Pupil Expectations through:

- celebrating effort over achievement,
- maintaining a culture where the effort put into achievement is recognised and valued more than the outcome,
- raising pupil expectations, perseverance and resilience,
- appropriate INSET,
- the sharing of good practice,
- annotated portfolios of exemplar work,
- moderation of work to improve assessment across the school and in turn the ability to recognise the more able pupil,
- discussions with able pupils about how they best learn,
- setting appropriate targets.

Curriculum Planning and Delivery

We provide a broad, balanced and 'fun' curriculum with many opportunities for our 'most able' children to excel academically, artistically and in sporting activities. Teacher's skills and high degree of subject knowledge enables work to be planned in breadth, depth and pace. Our Theme Weeks, Clubs programmes in and out of school time, visits made, visitors to school such as Theatre Companies, Artists, Musicians and parents all contribute to an enriched curriculum.

Children are provided with 'in depth' learning which includes high order questioning and differentiated activities, which challenge children's thinking and develop independent working, both individually and in groups. There is an emphasis in providing opportunities for the 'most able' children to be challenged in their thinking through:

- Philosophy for children (P4C)
- thinking maps
- write from the beginning
- modelled writing
- debate and discussions
- making predictions
- using deduction and inference
- justification for their thoughts
- reflection on their learning
- processing and analysis
- language richness and economy.

Through the range of grouping strategies (see AFL Policy), the 'most able' children not only benefit from working in same ability groups but are able to recognise the benefit this has for them by working with children of mixed ability. Working as part of a team and acting as role models enable the 'most able' to articulate and refine their thinking and understanding.

In sports, the most talented children are able to demonstrate and coach their peers.

Independent activities also include the use of IT and computer programs, as well as the use of the Internet with websites such as NRICH for maths and problem solving activities. Further independence and responsibility are encouraged through a variety of opportunities, such as having responsibility in class, being house captains and lunchtime monitors.

Homework is another way in which our 'most able' children are challenged and extended with opportunities to do some research and consider ways of presenting their work.

Children work in a range of groupings, including small ability groups (typically for Phonics ,English & Mathematics) as well as in mixed ability larger groups and in pairs. Planning is differentiated and there is progression and continuity in lessons planned and knowledge and skills to be taught. Learning objectives are shared both in the short term and in the long term allowing children to see the 'Bigger Picture' emerge. They are challenged further through the use of thinking tools that help them develop strategies for working logically and help organise their thinking.

At Oaklands Junior School we will:

- Ensure schemes of work and lesson plans include effective and explicit strategies for differentiation which provides appropriate challenge for the most able.
- learning objectives and learning outcomes should also be differentiated to meet the needs of the most able students
- ensure planning recognises that more able pupils need qualitatively different learning experiences, and not just more of the same
- utilise a variety of learning strategies and approaches which acknowledge that individuals learn in different ways
- provide opportunities for pupils to use and develop higher level thinking skills through extended writing in all curriculum areas, P4C, problem solving and extended research.

Teachers use a wide variety of teaching strategies to facilitate challenge, including:

- Assessment for Learning to aid individual planning and target setting
- provision for extending the breadth and depth of understanding
- the use of open-ended tasks, where original responses are valued and effort most of all
- differentiated resources and tasks
- higher order questioning techniques using Blooms taxonomy
- grouping by ability within the mixed ability classroom for specific tasks
- opportunities for reflective analysis through self and peer assessment
- Open ended homework tasks so that there is an opportunity for the more able pupil to challenge themselves

Checklist of Criteria for identifying possible children with high potential:

- Ask lots of questions
- want to know why something is so
- not satisfied with simple answers to questions
- has lots of information on many things
- may show more interest in 'big ideas' than in basic skills knowledge
- remember things that have only been heard or seen once
- seems to understand easily
- become easily upset at injustices
- interested in adult concerns
- often has a better reason than you do for not doing what you want done
- has high expectations of self and others
- seems restless, if given unchallenging tasks
- likes solving puzzles and problems
- reads books that are normally read by older children
- enjoys meeting or talking with older children or adults.

Creative Ability may be displayed through many of the following characteristics:

- tries to do things in different, unusual, imaginative ways
- has an unusual or quirky sense of humour (e.g using puns, making unusual connexions)
- likes variety and novelty
- has a vivid imagination
- responds emotionally to stories and events
- enjoys personal risk taking
- seems adventurous
- invents new ways of doing things e.g. new rules for games

Policy Review- The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the MA&T coordinator and the headteacher as part of the general monitoring of the curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed every two years in the Summer by the MA&T coordinator, headteacher and the Curriculum Committee or sooner if the need arises.

Related Documents

- Assessment for Learning Policy
- Homework Policy
- Computing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Best Value Policy