

Able Gifted and Talented Policy

Our Vision

At Bournes Green Infant School the governors, staff, children, parents and carers work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust in a community that is strengthened and enriched by a diversity of background, culture and religion. Our priority is to foster the self-confidence, self-esteem and independence of *all* in a climate of growth and opportunity that will enable us to achieve the highest standards. We actively promote a healthy environment in which children enjoy learning and develop the skills needed to become responsible members of society. We aim to bring learning to life.

'**Strength Through Wisdom**' was the original mission statement for our school. Today we nurture our children to be confident and articulate with an enjoyment of learning in the belief that this will enable them to gain strength from their developing wisdom.

To be read in conjunction with our Disability Discrimination Action scheme, Equal Opportunities Policy and accessibility plans. See also related policies: Assessment, Role of Co-ordinator, Behaviour, Teaching and Learning, Curriculum, Special Education Needs, Early Years, Home Activities Guidelines and all subject based policies.

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents. Within this range of individuality there are children who are more intellectual than others, and children who are particularly talented in certain, specific areas of ability.

Aims & Objectives

Through this policy, in all curriculum areas, we aim to:

- ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all our children
- enable all children to develop their full potential
- ensure that we challenge and extend all children through the activities that we provide for them
- support and care for the whole child both socially and intellectually develop staff awareness, strategies and teaching skills in order to provide challenge and flexibility in the curriculum
- make provision for all children, taking into account practical restraints, staff time and resources

- ensure a consistent approach to the support and identification of Able, Gifted and Talented children

Definitions

Within the context of Bournes Green Infant School, 'Able, Gifted and Talented' children are defined as follows:

An '**Able**' child performs **well** ahead of their year group.

A '**Gifted**' child demonstrates a broad range of achievement often accompanied by well-developed learning skills that are **significantly greater** than most of their peers.

A '**Talented**' child demonstrates a specific talent in areas such as Music, PE, Art, or Design & Technology.

Within the context of our school, where performance is typically well above average (as confirmed by 'RAISE online') we plan at a high level for all children.

Analysis of EYFS data by the school and the local authority enables us gather information about the context of each cohort.

Careful analysis of all available data tells us that Able, Gifted and Talented children in our school may be performing at levels that are significantly above expectations in other schools locally and nationally.

Identification Strategies

At Bournes Green Infant School, we recognise that any child may be 'Able, Gifted or Talented' regardless of their socio-economic background, home language, race, creed or any Special Educational Need. The performance of all children is monitored, as defined in the individual subject policies.

The outcomes of observations, assessment tasks and conversations with children will be used to inform us when considering nominations for the Able, Gifted and Talented Register.

Identification, just as assessment, is a continuous process that is used to ensure effective and suitable provision. By identifying the AGT children, teachers can assess the needs of their class in order to inform their planning, thus ensuring appropriate pace, matched to ability and challenge. This process begins when the child joins our school. Conversations with pre-schools and parents seek to gain information on each child's achievements and interests in particular areas. Children undergo baseline assessment within the first half-term of joining our reception

classes. This gives us valuable information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning as the year progresses.

There is no single measurement with which to identify Able, Gifted and Talented children. In our school we use a combination of the following sources of information:

- teacher observation and assessment
- nomination and records of progress
- National Curriculum levels
- background knowledge of the individual child, including discussion with parent(s) and past teachers
- testing, such as SATs
- feedback from external specialists

Underachievement

When considering whether an individual is Able, Gifted or Talented, it is important to remember that he/she may be underachieving for some reason. Therefore, the following checklist proves helpful. A talented /gifted child may be missed if he/she:

- is quiet
- produces work that is untidy
- is using English as an Additional Language
- is immature
- is slow to read / write
- has a summer birthday
- has limited out-of-school experiences
- is untidy or lethargic (may be participating in activities outside school that are very demanding)
- is over-active or withdrawn
- does not perform well in tests
- appears bored or distracted
- shows little confidence in self
- has poorly developed social skills
- is clumsy
- shows little interest in improving performance
- avoids work which requires effort or concentration

Underachievement is identified as a result of analysis of tracking data by class-teachers and the SMT, child observation, child tracking, test results, generic checklists and the outcomes of child/parent interviews.

The AGT Register

At Bournes Green Infant School, we have an 'Able, Gifted and Talented Register' and an 'Awareness List'.

The register identifies whether each individual child is regarded as 'Able', 'Gifted' or 'Talented' and is organised into separate subject areas in addition to 'Learning Skills'.

The 'Awareness List' is also held which records children from across the school who have begun to show some potential towards being 'Able', 'Gifted' or 'Talented', as defined in this policy. Both the Register and the Awareness List are open, working documents and are subject to regular review by the AGT Leader, in discussion with the relevant parties.

In our school, the class-teachers work closely with their teaching assistants, sharing their observations and assessments of children. As such, the teacher nominates children for the 'Able, Gifted and Talented Register' or the 'Awareness List' on behalf of the classroom staff. Similarly, we encourage our parents to share their children's outside achievements with us, and as such any parental nominations can be passed through the class teacher.

As the children in our school are at a very early stage in their development, inclusion on the register should not be taken as an indication that they will always be more 'Able', 'Gifted' or 'Talented' than their peers. With this in mind, we continue to monitor children throughout Reception and Year One, placing those showing potential on the Awareness List. We do not place children onto the Register until Year Two when all children have had the opportunity to develop their skills and talents and have begun to display these with greater consistency.

Provision

At Bournes Green Infant School we believe that provision is generally most effective when it is made within the classroom, through a stimulating, creative and differentiated curriculum. The school is committed to providing opportunities which extend and enrich the curriculum for all children by giving breadth and depth to their experiences. We believe that children learn best when they enjoy their activities and this ethos is at the heart of our practice. By fostering children's natural curiosity, we aim to develop their thinking skills, confidence and appetite for learning. A problem-solving and investigative approach to activities is therefore adopted whenever possible.

As we have a number of able children in every year group, their needs are catered for through our whole-class planning. We have high-expectations of all our children and a 'top-down' approach is adopted, whereby higher-level activities and questions are planned first, guided by our work on Bloom's Taxonomy. These are then differentiated to meet the needs of the rest of the class.

As well as higher-order thinking, whole-class planning across the curriculum also addresses a range of learning styles, or 'Multiple Intelligences', in order to meet the needs of the full range of learners. Through this approach, we aim to:

- develop children's perceptions of themselves as learners by making them aware of learning-styles and the 'Skills and Language of Learning' (See the '5 Skills for Learning' in the Behaviour Policy)
- develop children's natural curiosity and the ability to ask and answer questions, by providing a wealth of opportunities for learning through play and practical experience
- offer children opportunities to generate their own learning
- the opportunity to work at higher cognitive levels
- the opportunity to develop specific skills or talents
- the opportunity to experience a broader, richer curriculum
- inspire in all children a sense of enquiry

Teachers may challenge Able, Gifted and Talented children within individual subject areas through any of the following:

- planning for differentiation
- the use of questioning to raise the level of challenge
- the teaching of thinking skills
- planning extension and enrichment activities which incorporate key skills
- fostering creativity
- restructuring the class organisation or child groupings
- developing home-school partnerships
- creating opportunities for mentor support
- support from beyond the school, (including specialist clubs and involvement in activities delivered through our local network for Able, Gifted and Talented children.)

Individual learning needs will be assessed and any of the following strategies may be applied as appropriate;

- acceleration
- setting by ability, so that gifted and talented children can from time to time, work together with others of a similar ability; this will include working with older children where suitable
- withdrawal for individual support when necessary
- specific teaching and mentoring
- working with external partners

Transition

In the case of our Year Two children transferring to our junior school, information on Able, Gifted and Talented children is shared as part of the teacher-to-teacher

transition meeting, when copies of the current Register and Awareness List are also supplied.

Equality of Opportunity

At Bournes Green Infant School, we recognise that children's religious, cultural and linguistic heritage may provide us with opportunities to enrich our curriculum, whilst further developing the self-esteem of individual children. Where possible, teachers endeavour to work with children and their families to celebrate their backgrounds through planned classroom activities.

We also recognise that all children are individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents. Therefore, we expect that our AGT Register will represent children from across our cohort.

English as an Additional Language

We support our children, for whom English is an additional language, in a variety of ways. Whole class sessions provide helpful adult models of spoken English and opportunities for careful listening, oral exchange and supportive shared repetition. Group work provides opportunities for intensive, focussed teaching input. Children for whom English is an additional language may be introduced to any specific language in advance of the lesson. We repeat instructions for all children when necessary and emphasise key words. Some language may need careful explaining.

Special Educational Needs

It is our intention whenever possible to include all children in our lessons, so that they benefit from the emphasis on oral and investigative work and have the opportunity to watch and listen to other children demonstrating and explaining their ideas. Some classes may have children whose progress warrants special consideration. After consultation with the school Inclusion Manager the class teachers may wish to consider if specific lessons are the most appropriate way for the child to spend his/ her time. In this instance, they may work towards their own targets as outlined on their Statement or Provision Map.

Responsibilities

Headteacher - It is the responsibility of the headteacher to keep well informed, provide active leadership and set high expectations for what can be achieved by staff and children.

Able, Gifted & Talented Leader - The leader for AGT shares his/her expertise and gives the support that is needed to influence practice throughout the school. S/he takes responsibility for the development of the policy and register.

Subject Leaders

When revising policies, it is the responsibility of the subject leader to ensure that they identify how Able, Gifted or Talented children will be identified, provided for and monitored within their subject area.

Class Teachers

Class teachers will identify Able, Gifted and Talented children within their class, liaising with subject leaders, parents and external specialists where appropriate. It is their responsibility to report children to the AGT Leader for inclusion on the AGT register. Teachers set clear, challenging targets for raising the achievements of all children. The school's progress towards these targets is regularly reviewed against national, local and our own school data.

Teaching Assistants - Teaching assistants are used effectively to support teachers in all lessons. The role of support staff is to help to make sure that each child plays a full part in every lesson. This may be through one of several approaches:

- encouragement
- questioning
- prompting children
- reinforcing teaching points as well as key language
- assisting children with resources
- taking small groups and delivering intervention plans
- working with groups on differentiated work across the ability range

Governors - Governors are involved in formulating a policy, monitoring and evaluation. All of the governors have a responsibility for AGT as part of their subject-related responsibilities.

Review

This policy was fully reviewed by the staff and approved by the Governing Body in Spring 2016

It will be reviewed in accordance with the Key Documentation and Policies Review Timetable.