

Academically More Able Pupils

We believe that good practice in provision for highly able children is about high quality provision for all children.

‘A rising tide lifts all ships’:

Joseph Renzulli-National Research Centre on the Gifted and Talented

Definition

Academically More Able - A child who is working a level or above the expected level for their peers in English and Maths.

Within Northburn we would see this as a pupil who is working above age related expectations (ARE), or at least at greater depth with the capacity to move into above ARE. (This group, in addition to those identified as higher ability from KS1 assessments, will be individually tracked through Frog for Reading, Writing and Maths.)

e.g. A year 5 pupil who worked in top set alongside the more able year 6 pupils- accessing the year 6 KPIs after completing the Y5 KPIs at expected and many at greater depth in English. The pupil also accessed a mix of Y5 greater depth and Y6 KPIs in Maths, and would therefore be identified as being academically more able.

Background to Policy (Taken from DfE Research project)

Currently academically more able learners are described as “those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics or English.” For the purpose of this study ‘academically more able pupils’ were identified as those who entered the Key Stage above national expectations in English or mathematics.

Research carried out by senior leaders and teachers in DfE surveyed schools identified the following common characteristics of some academically more able pupils.

Pupils:

- May enjoy a creative and sometimes more cross curricular approach to teaching and learning; they often have a passionate interest in a particular area, for example a specific period of history or aspect of science.
- May become more acutely aware of their progress and rapidly become despondent if they start to fall behind their peers.
- May have the emotional maturity relevant to their chronological age, despite being academically more able and working on learning drawn from an age above their own.
- May have more diverse learning preferences and approaches and therefore need a wider variety of teaching strategies.
- May find it difficult to fit in and work with their peers.
- May only do the minimum amount of work, if not sufficiently academically stretched; they need to be ‘pushed to deeper thinking’.

- May have a disparity between their cognitive ability and their written outcomes as they can become impatient with the process of writing.

To meet these specific needs, teaching for academically more able pupils had the following features:

- Teachers had secure knowledge of their subject and how it related to other areas of the curriculum.
- Teachers had an excellent understanding of progression within their subject, particularly in relation to achievement at the higher levels.
- Lessons were creative and focused on higher order thinking and extension of subject vocabulary.
- The teachers all fostered a 'partnership approach' when teaching the more able; this allowed pupils to develop collaborative working skills with an adult that could be transferred back into the classroom. Lessons were planned to foster independence: the best teachers ensured that the direction of the sessions and dialogue within them was increasingly pupil-led.
- All teachers placed emphasis on planning and completing extended, in-depth writing.
- Outcomes from lessons were fed directly back into the classroom to celebrate the pupils' success and to ensure the high standards were recognised and maintained.

(DfE 2011)

Identification

Many More Able children will be identified because their progress through the National Curriculum takes them beyond the expectations for their age. This may occur through testing or teacher assessments.

The children undertake national tests in Year 2 and 6, plus the optional national tests in Years 3, 4 and 5. Teachers also make regular assessments of each child's progress in each subject and the children who are performing at a standard significantly above the average for their peers will be highlighted on the More Able register.

However, testing alone is not sufficient for the identification of more able pupils. This may exclude underachievers, and those children with specific skills.

A range of people may be involved in the identification process:

- Teachers
- TAs and other school support staff
- Parents/Carers
- Pupils
- Specialists such as sports coaches or music teachers.

Monitoring of progress

Progress in the area of greater ability will be monitored by subject teacher. This will be overseen by the pupil's form teacher to ensure co-ordination across a range of subjects. (This should avoid any pupil being overburdened by additional demands from any 1 subject, to the detriment

of other areas of learning. E.g. a talented gymnast not spending so much time at sporting practices they are unable to manage the rest of their learning and have the time needed for play and personal development.

Key stage leaders will maintain an overview of more able pupils in their key stage.

Working with more able pupils

Through effective planning, assessment, record-keeping teachers will:

- Provide problem solving and investigation activities to develop reasoning, questioning and thinking skills.
- Identify appropriate objectives and have explicit gifted and talented activities identified in planning across the whole curriculum.
- Encourage all children to become independent learners and discerning questioners by:
 - organising 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
- Analyse attainment data, including performance criteria in PE and the creative arts in order to identify those pupils who have the potential to reach high levels of performance.
- Establish what the children have done previously in order to prevent repetition.
- Provide challenges through high-quality tasks for enrichment and extension.
- Differentiate appropriately and plan work so that there is extension material for the able children.
- Set differentiated homework.
- Ensure pupils achievements match their potential ability, taking into account the schools' performance data as well as information from its own pupil tracking.

Appendix 1

We would look to identify more broadly than only considering Maths and English to identify pupils who fit the following definitions:

Gifted - refers to a child of exceptional ability who possesses abilities so well developed and so far in advance of their peer group that the school needs to provide additional learning opportunities which develop, enhance and extend these abilities. (This may be only in one curriculum area but would be where a pupil showed attainment/ability significantly in excess of ARE. E.g. a year 4 pupil able to access Maths work normally given to most able year 6 pupils.)

Talented - Refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields, such as sport or music, but who does not perform at a high level across all areas of learning.

Policy Prepared- November 2016

Agreed by SLT and School Improvement Committee- Spring term 2017

Review date- November 2017

