



Stranmillis Primary School

Gifted and Talented Policy

Date: September 2015

Aims

In catering for able pupils, we aim to:

- present pupils with work that challenges, stretches and excites them, in an environment that celebrates excellence;
- provide a suitably differentiated and challenging curriculum so that all children are stretched at the level of their ability;
- create the right opportunities, with support and encouragement, to help the child develop a desire to learn and so achieve as much as possible;
- provide opportunities to develop specific skills or talents;
- utilise a range of strategies to heighten the motivation and raise the aspirations of all the children;
- provide opportunities for the children to excel in sport and the arts;
- support the emotional well-being of the child; and
- provide opportunities, where necessary, for distinct and discernibly different personalised learning opportunities (i.e. for gifted and talented pupils to work at higher cognitive levels or at a higher ability level than the majority of their peers).

Definitions

We use the term 'gifted' to mean those pupils who are capable of excelling academically in one or more subjects such as English, drama or technology.

'Talented' refers to those pupils who may excel in practical skills such as sport, leadership or artistic performance.

In comparison with their peers, when engaged in their area of expertise, gifted and talented children will tend to:

- show a passion for particular subjects and seek to pursue them;
- master the rules of a domain easily and transfer their insights to new problems;
- analyse their own behaviour and hence use a greater range of learning strategies than others;
- make connections between past and present learning;
- work at a level beyond that expected for their years;
- show intellectual maturity and enjoy engaging in depth with subject material;
- actively and enthusiastically engage in debate and discussion on a particular subject; and
- produce original and creative responses to common problems.

Rationale

At Stranmillis Primary School we recognise pupils as individuals with unique strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents. We will ensure that the abilities of gifted and talented learners, as with all other pupils, are nurtured effectively in order to avoid underachievement. Providing for the gifted and talented pupils in our school is a question of equity; all pupils have a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and abilities. Our approach to the identification of and support for gifted and talented children is an integral part of our school vision, to challenge and extend the thinking of all its pupils via a broad and balanced curriculum. This policy links into the general school aims and philosophy and other school policies such as SEN.

The main focus at Stranmillis will be to create the right opportunities, with support and encouragement, to help each child develop a desire to learn and to achieve as much as possible. This will be achieved by presenting pupils with work that challenges, stretches and excites them on a daily basis, in an environment that celebrates excellence. Teachers will maintain high levels of intellectual challenge in the classroom. In addition, pupils will have opportunities to excel in sport and the arts. This forms the basis of a vigorous gifted and talented programme which increases performance across the board, lifting the aspirations of pupils, teachers and support staff and promoting an environment where working to the very best of one's ability is celebrated.

Identification and Provision

Normal Provision for the majority of gifted and talented pupils

At Stranmillis standards are very high for all our pupils. A very significant number of our children are of very high ability; each class will have a group of gifted and talented pupils. Consequently we do not feel that a separate register of Gifted and Talented pupils would be either appropriate or helpful.

Children's progress will be tracked carefully using a range of standardised tests supported by teacher observations and judgements.

- Teachers will identify any children in their class who are under-performing. Three measures will be used to identify such children
 - ✓ children with a PiM / PiE score 5 or more points below their NRIT score;
 - ✓ children with an NRIT score of 95+ who are not predicted to achieve level 4 at the end of KS2; and
 - ✓ children who in the opinion of their teacher are under-performing.
- This will:
 - ✓ maintain a focus on every child, regardless of ability, achieving at least to his/her full potential; and

- ✓ identify those children who despite performing at a high level are capable of achieving even more highly.
- Action plans will be drawn up for these children in October, in consultation with the Vice-Principal. Within the action plan, barriers to high performance will be identified, together with SMART targets to address the specific barriers identified.
- The Vice Principal will meet with each teacher in January and again after Easter to review progress made by the children and to provide appropriate advice and support.

Exceptional Provision

- Where a child is achieving at a level significantly higher than the other children at the top of the class, then distinct and discernibly different personalised learning opportunities will be provided. This will be closely monitored by the Principal, the SENCO and the Vice-principal.

Our emphasis will be on providing an appropriate, challenging and supportive environment where all children can fulfil their potential. The principles of good teaching for all children provide a foundation for effective provision for the gifted and talented. Teachers will:

- ensure that every child achieves as highly as they can, creating a culture of high expectations and aspirations, in which it's 'cool to be clever' and where all sorts of talents and abilities are valued;
- recognise and build on what the learners already know, setting out clear objectives for each lesson and sharing them with pupils;
- make learning vivid and real, developing understanding through enquiry, creativity, e-learning and problem solving, within and beyond the classroom;
- make learning an enjoyable and challenging experience, using a variety of teaching styles and matching tasks to learners' maturity and preferred learning styles;
- enrich the learning experience, making links across the curriculum;
- develop children's confidence, self-discipline and understanding of the learning process, helping them to think systematically, manage information and learn from others; and
- make children partners in their learning, using assessment for learning to help them assess their work, reflect on how they learn and inform subsequent planning and practice.

Gifted and talented children benefit from pacy, purposeful classrooms where teaching is personalised, inspirational and fun.

Class teachers need to cater for their gifted and talented pupils in short, medium and long term plans, building in opportunities for them to perform beyond the level expected for their age. Learning objectives should be ambitious and clear, and children should be aware of them.

Teachers can employ a number of strategies for differentiating work effectively in the classroom and match tasks to the needs of gifted and talented children by providing:

- a common task that invites different responses and outcomes;
- tasks that vary in difficulty (as in graded exercises) so that able children can begin at an appropriate level and progress further; and
- separate tasks linked to a common theme.

Having provided appropriate tasks for gifted and talented pupils, teachers should:

- negotiate challenging targets, encouraging children to set some of their own;
- emphasise investigation, problem solving and exploration, which can possibly be sustained over a number of lessons (and for homework);
- avoid overloading pupils with work; and
- provide appropriate support and encouragement.

Enrichment Opportunities

In addition, pupils will have opportunities to excel in sport and the arts. This includes opportunities to participate in:

- rugby;
- soccer;
- cricket;
- netball;
- hockey;
- cross-country;
- tennis;
- differentiated recorder groups and ensembles;
- orchestra;
- school band; and
- choir.