St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Achieving Ambitions

ACADEMICALLY MORE ABLE and TALANTED POLICY

We guide our pupils on to the path to achieving their ambitions.

On their journey, they **Love** *one another,* **Learn** *to achieve excellence,* **Laugh** *through enriching experiences and* **Live** *life to the full.*

Drafted by	SLT
Approved by Governors	Teaching and Learning Committee
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Rationale

All members of staff and governors at St Mary's accept responsibility, and are committed to working, for quality and equality of opportunity for all our children. We recognise children as individuals with unique personalities, skills and abilities and we provide teaching which makes learning challenging, engaging and enables children to reach their potential.

We also recognise that within our school there are children whose performance or potential is significantly greater than that of their peers. Therefore, we have the responsibility to meet the needs of these children and this policy outlines the identification procedures and provision made.

Note: The Department for Education no longer uses the term 'Gifted & Talented', but does recognise the needs of academically more able pupils. Currently, academically more able learners are described as "those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics or English." The DfE have produced studies where "Academically More Able" pupils were identified as those who entered the Key Stage above national expectations in English or mathematics.

This policy will be shared via the school website and discussed at meetings with families of children who are identified as higher achievers and at other parent/carer events, including open days for prospective pupils.

Definitions

At the heart of the work in every class at St Mary's lies a cycle of planning, teaching and assessing. These arrangements take into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests that the children bring into the school. The majority of children will learn and progress within these arrangements. Higher achieving children will require a pace that is more appropriate to them and opportunity to study subjects to a greater breadth and depth, using and suitably applying their curriculum knowledge to solve problems and investigate possibilities.

Academically More Able pupils: Excelling in an academic subject - demonstrating mastery at a greater depth or higher standard e.g. Maths, English, Science, or Computing

Talented pupils: Have a particular ability in subjects, e.g. the Arts including Music, Drama, Physical Education and Dance.

Aims

Our school's aim is to make provision for these children through a mastery curriculum in everyday quality first class teaching in their own year group.

The aim of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to the identification and support of the academically more able or talented child through:

Identification of Academically More Able & Talented Children using a range of techniques:

- Analysis of information from end of year assessments in reception assessments by the class teachers, assessment coordinator and subject leaders.
- Analysis of formative and summative assessments by the class teachers, assessment lead and subject leaders.

- Standardised and scaled scored tests
- Ongoing tracking assessment – data on Insight
- Teacher observation of social and leadership skills
- Discussion with colleagues and subject leads
- Consultation with parents
- Information received from previous schools
- Where appropriate, recognition of learning made outside of the school environment

The talents and abilities of all children will be recognised, regardless of their race, gender, disability or social class. Talent is equally distributed across all social classes, but opportunities are not. We must identify and nurture all talents and abilities in our school. At St Mary's, we believe that all children are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- achieve their best
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into the next phase of their education

In termly Pupil Progress meetings teachers and other staff make regular appraisals of progress for all pupils, seeking to identify pupils working above their peers or making more than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress and attainment which:

- is working significantly above age related expectations
- shows an aptitude to a particular subject or curriculum area

It is also worth remembering that more able and talented pupils can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one area
- Of a high ability but with low motivation
- Of good verbal ability but with low writing skills
- Very able but with a short attention span
- Very able but with poor social skills
- Keen to 'disguise' their skills

Criteria for identification:

Aptitudes in English & Mathematics

Academically more able children are identified in English and Mathematics when they are working at mastery level above age related expectations. These children may be demonstrating the following in English:

• High levels of fluency and originality in their conversation
• Use research skills more effectively to synthesise information
• Enjoy reading, and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level
• Use a wider vocabulary, and enjoy working with words
• See issues from a broader range of perspectives, recognising subjectivity in narratives
• Use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion

Academically more able children may demonstrate the following in Mathematics:

• Explore a broader range of strategies for problem solving

• Are more curious when working with numbers and investigating problems
• See solutions more quickly, without needing to try all the options
• Look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain
• Work more flexibly, and establish their own strategies
• Enjoy manipulating numbers

Academically more able pupils often:

• 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.
• become more acutely aware of their progress and rapidly become despondent if they start to fall behind their peers.
• have more diverse learning preferences and approaches and therefore need a wider variety of teaching strategies
• find it difficult to fit in and work with their peers
• May choose to disguise progress in order to better 'fit in'
• only do the minimum amount of work, if not sufficiently academically stretched; they need to be 'pushed to deeper thinking'
• have a disparity between their cognitive ability and their written outcomes as they can become impatient with the process of writing

PLANNING FOR PROVISION

At St Mary's we aim to:

- create an ethos where it is OK to be 'bright' and where pupils feel good about achieving excellence
- provide a wide range of resources to accommodate the needs of able pupils
- offer opportunities for the able pupils to work independently or with older pupils of the same ability
- teach a mastery curriculum
- celebrate achievement
- involve pupils in decision-making; for example as members of the school council and Young Leaders
- encourage pupils to participate in out-of-the-classroom activities
- provide interventions such as book clubs and a school newspaper
- promote an atmosphere of inclusiveness where any negative stereotyped generalisations about more able and talented pupils are challenged
- ensure that provision of more able and talented pupils is embedded in all aspects of school life
- support the effective transition of more able and talented pupils to the next stage of education
- encourage parents and carers to be aware of their role in supporting and encouraging their child's learning by recognising their child's interests and abilities, providing resources and opportunities at home and setting realistic targets
- promote celebration of achievements by asking parents to inform the school if their child has an out-of-school award which is then celebrated in the newsletter

Provision for the Academically More Able

At St Mary's, the main focus is to improve provision for able pupils in day-to-day teaching and learning.

- At St Mary's we focus on *enrichment* and *extension* as the two main strategies for meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils but we would also use *acceleration* (accessing work from a higher year group). This would only happen in exceptional cases.

- *Enrichment* consists of broadening a pupil's education. This can consist of enabling a pupil to study aspects of topic that there would not normally be time to study, or it can consist of adding extra subjects to the curriculum.

- *Extension* occurs when pupils are encouraged to develop more sophisticated thinking and reasoning skills.

Types of Provision

Class provision:

- Teachers have high expectations
- Teaching is personalised, pacy and challenging
- Tasks are designed to take account of levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding and are differentiated appropriately
- There are planned extension opportunities or open-ended tasks that promote higher order thinking skills
- A variety of grouping is used effectively
- There is access to higher level tests for assessment
- Digging Deeper' questions on IWB slides for Maths

School based provision, varying according to subject area and covered using a variety of methods:

- Shared celebration of children's achievements and their application of key learning skills.
- School clubs including sports, arts, music
- School councils and leadership roles
- Enrichment Fridays offering varied and wide ranging activities
- Enrichment opportunities including specialist days
- Intervention Groups
- Opportunities to learn a variety of musical instruments
- Opportunities for performance
- Partnership with cluster schools
- Workshops with cluster schools

Families

We pass on information to families about areas in which their children are achieving particularly highly, in parent meetings and the end of year written report. We set homework with appropriate levels of challenge, but also set open-ended tasks and ongoing areas of learning (eg times tables, spellings, reading) in which we encourage the children to go as deeply as they can. We run workshops for parents and send home resources to help them support their children's learning out of school, including giving them access to online learning resources.

Transition to Secondary School

We pass on detailed information about children's abilities to their next schools, including information about Higher Achieving children. We aim to equip them and their families to have the highest expectations for the next phase of their education, to play a part in leading their own learning, and also to communicate themselves with their new teachers if they feel the work is not appropriately challenging. As part of our own transition work we send members of staff to visit our former pupils in Year 7, and the conversations we have enable us to pass on key information to their new school – including any instances of children feeling they are not being challenged or are struggling in any way to maintain their high levels of learning.