



Teaching Able, Gifted and Talented Children Policy

'We believe that Able, Gifted & Talented students thrive in a setting that encourages excellence for all.'

Sancton Wood Staff 2021

Ethos

At Sancton Wood School we aim to ensure that no student 'slips through the net' and that all children are given the opportunity to thrive. As such, the facets of good teaching for Able, Gifted and Talented students are, in fact, the facets that underpin all of our teaching.

Our whole school ethos recognises the worth of each student as well as their particular strength, Sancton Wood has a culture of support and high expectation which is essential for the growth of all our pupils. Labelling a proportion of our school community as 'able, gifted and talented' would be divisive and undermine the ethos of the school. Our stated aims and values recognise the individual abilities of all our pupils and commit us to helping them to reach their full potential, not only intellectually but also creatively and physically. We place emphasis on delivering lessons and courses which challenge pupils. Within every subject we expect teachers to teach the most able as well as provide support for the least able pupils. We hope that all our pupils will be challenged beyond the confines of our whole school curriculum.

We recognise that finding our children's individual strength and area of expertise is an ongoing process. Some may be very easy to identify on entry to the school, with others it may emerge later. In essence it is our role as a school to work continually with all our students, finding out what makes each of them 'tick'; thus, building self-esteem and confidence in all.

We have a register of talented students held within our MIS system, iSAMS. The register is regularly updated by all and informed by the pupils, staff, and parents.

Definitions

Over the years there have been many definitions of what makes a pupil Able, Gifted or Talented.

Gifted pupils are generally taken to be those in the top 5% of the national ability range, and this is the definition used by the Department for Education.

'Able' pupils are understood to be 'those with strong intellectual and academic abilities'. An able pupil may be defined as one who achieves, or can achieve, at a level significantly higher than his or her peer group in the school.

Talented pupils are understood to be those who 'excel in specific areas, for example, music, art, design, drama, dance or sport', thus possessing special ability, notable talent, or aptitude in that particular field.

Identification



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Able, Gifted and Talented pupils may demonstrate their particular strengths in many different ways and so identification is not always straightforward. It is matter of everyday policy for our teachers to be prepared to recognise indications that may lead to categorisation as a 'gifted' or a 'talented' pupil and, having done so, ensure that all lessons and activities exploit the talent and potential of the highest achievers. In the classroom teachers at Sancton Wood aspire to deliver 'excellent teaching' in both 'the planning of the lesson' and in the modelling of 'behaviour' in lessons. Excellence in teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement and so delivering lessons that motivate and inspire the brightest in the class is central. The School's Gifted and Talented programme 'Thriving Minds' enables all pupils, but particularly those who are more able, to develop the necessary skills to think differently, to think more broadly, more positively and more laterally. Outside of the classroom the talents and skills of our pupils are recognised, nurtured, and exploited to give a pupil the very best opportunity to grow in in their talent beyond the confines of school, whether that is at a local level, at county level, a national level or, indeed, internationally. Teachers may recognise or identify special ability through:

- consistently high achievement
- rapid grasp of new concepts
- working consistently above their peers
- demand and delivery of more challenging work

Other indicators that a gifted or talented pupil may display include:

- powers of reasoning
- using a superior quality and quantity of vocabulary
- possessing unusual imagination
- having a great intellectual curiosity
- following complex directions easily
- having reading interests that cover a wide range of subjects
- exhibiting keen powers of observation
- aptitude or skill in sport, music, drama or art that is above the expectation for the age range and for which scholarships may be awarded.

Here at Sancton Wood, we identify ability and higher functioning skills (for example, strong readers or aptitude in comprehension) in a variety of ways including 'objective measures' of underlying ability which include:

- PIRA and PUMA
- CAT 4
- Formative and summative internal assessments
- Maths Challenge Results
- Reading tests
- Diagnostic assessment by Educational Psychologists
- Knowledge of outstanding achievement outside School



Again, it is important to understand that gifted and talented pupils may possess abilities other than those demonstrated through academic achievement.

Strategies

All able, gifted, and talented pupils are placed on the School's A, G & T register. Candidates for inclusion on the Register should be recommended to the Assistant Principal (Academic) who will suggest the most appropriate strategy for meeting the needs of each pupil. All lessons are to deliver teaching to the highest ability range and should be differentiated appropriately for other learners in the class. Differentiation can be achieved in many ways, e.g.:

- Differentiation **by outcome** – the same material, stimulus, or tasks are used for all pupils. Differentiation is achieved by individuals answering at their own levels of ability.
- Differentiation **by resource** – this method is based upon the fact that some pupils can work with more advanced resources than others.
- Differentiation **by task** – a variety of tasks are provided for the range of individual pupils in the class. More able children can start further along the line.
- Differentiation **by conversation** – The vocabulary and complexity of language used needs to vary for different pupils.
- Differentiation **by support** – the amount and degree of help provided can be differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Differentiation **by pace** – some pupils need to move forward very gradually while more able pupils can sustain a much quicker programme.

'Thriving Minds' provides an extended programme of enrichment for the most able and those pupils interested in extending and challenging their perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs. Opportunities through the programme may also include.

[Thriving Minds Study Programme.pdf](#)

- extra-curricular opportunities to extend and challenge
- use of open-ended project work (HPQ)
- visits to places of special interest
- university courses and lectures
- online certificated courses
- competitions
- enrichment programmes run by other outside bodies

Heads of Departments will support pupils identified on the A, G & T Register. Mentoring support sessions will link with weekly enrichment activities where pupils are encouraged to register for trips, festivals, courses, lectures etc as part of the A, G&T programme 'Thriving Minds'. Internal scholarships will also be offered to our A, G and T pupils for Academic, STEM, Creative Arts and Sport.

The effectiveness of this Policy is monitored by the Assistant Principal (Academic) through termly pupil progress meetings. The progress of each pupil is further monitored by Form Tutors, Heads of Departments and the Assistant Principal (academic) for both the Senior and Prep school.



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