



Elvetham Heath Primary School

## **ACADEMICALLY MORE ABLE POLICY**

*Schools exist to help all young people fulfil their potential. They must identify and nurture the talents of their students, so they can go on to achieve the best that they can. To do this, schools must ensure that the education they provide challenges and encourages children at all levels.*

*Sean Harford, Ofsted National Director of Schools, March 2015*

### **1. RATIONALE**

At Elvetham Heath Primary School we believe there is no limit to aspiration and attainment for any pupil. We strive to provide a secure and challenging environment that stimulates the development of all pupils, ensuring that children are given opportunities to achieve their greatest progress. We plan our teaching and learning so that each child can aspire to the highest level of personal achievement. The purpose of this policy is to help to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as “Academically More Able.” These pupils must be identified, challenged and supported in order to ensure their individual needs are met, within and outside the curriculum. The aim of this policy is to provide guidance as to how we meet the needs of high attaining children, in keeping with our ethos of providing high quality learning experiences for all. We believe in providing the best possible provision for pupils of all abilities.

### **2. AIMS**

- To ensure that there are consistent procedures for the identification and tracking of academically more able pupils.
- To ensure more able pupils achieve to the best of their abilities.
- To ensure that these pupils have access to a challenging, broad, balanced curriculum that deepens their learning.
- Provide stimulating learning experiences for all pupils, encourage independent and collaborative learning and support pupils in taking initiative.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to work at higher cognitive levels and use more advanced thinking skills independently.
- Provide pupils with opportunities for pupils to develop specific skills and talents.
- Encourage children to reflect on the process of their own learning and to understand the factors that help them to make progress.
- Foster the development of well-rounded and balanced individuals, both intellectually, academically, emotionally and socially.
- Raise expectations and aspirations for all pupils.
- Be inclusive.

### **3. PRINCIPLES**

#### **3.1 Definition of Academically More Able (AMA)**

The terminology for this group of learners is varied and ever changing. In the past, the term 'Gifted and Talented', has been used, but now been replaced by the more specific 'academically more able' (Ofsted 2011) and 'most able' (Ofsted Inspection Handbook 2015). Academically more able learners have been described as "those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics or English." (DfE 2012).

For the sake of this document, AMA children will be identified as those who are capable of exceedingly high or exceptional attainment in one or more of the areas of learning including:

- Academic
- Intellectual
- Sporting
- Musical
- Dramatic
- Innovative design ability
- Artistic creativity
- Leadership
- Organisational ability
- Interpersonal skills

We recognise that a child may possess this potential although performance may not currently reflect this.

Our school will have, at any time, a number of AMA pupils, some of whom may perform at a standard that well exceeds that of others in their class or that expected for children in their age group. This may be in one or more areas of learning. Their performance will exceed that of above-average attainers and sometimes that of children described as well above average for their age. We believe that we can make a difference in enabling these pupils achieve the greatest possible progress.

#### **3.2 Identification**

We recognise the need to identify AMA pupils and appreciate that a designated list will require regular monitoring. Identification is not an end in itself, nor is it an exact science. The most effective form of identification is classroom provision that offers opportunities for all forms of ability to be demonstrated. To be inclusive, the process of identification will uncover pupils with potential as well as those already performing at a high level.

AMA children may exhibit some of the following:

- Have a wide vocabulary.
- Have learnt to speak early.
- Ask lots of good questions.
- Grasp new concepts earlier than others.
- Have a retentive memory.
- Be curious and able to concentrate for long periods of time on things they are interested in.
- Have a wide general knowledge.
- Enjoy problem solving.
- Work flexibly and use a range of strategies to approach a problem.
- Synthesise and evaluate information.
- Have an unusual and vivid imagination.
- Show strong feelings and opinions.
- See issues and problems from different perspectives.
- Have an odd sense of humour.
- Be perfectionists.
- Set high standards for themselves.
- Get bored easily.

Pupils who are talented in P.E. are likely to show many if not all of the following qualities:

- Think strategically with imagination.
- Show high levels of physical motivation.
- Thoughtful and independent performers.
- Understand how to improve skills from observation.
- Able to make decisions for themselves and others.
- Respond quickly to new challenges and tasks.
- Creative or original in their physical response.
- Excel in a recognised sport or area of sport (e.g. games/gymnastics/dance/athletics/swimming/outdoor adventure (usually from club coaching)).
- High level of co-ordination.

A range of identification evidence will be used, including:

- Staff recommendations.
- Assessment of children's work.
- Conversations with children.
- Test results.
- From parents, carers and outside agencies.
- Attributes checklists and subject specific checklists.
- Academic records.

We recognise that not all AMA pupils will achieve consistently, and this needs to be addressed. Disaffection and underachievement can also happen with potentially high attaining pupils, and in school we need to ensure that all our pupils are motivated to achieve. Through targets setting and working with all teachers, we will try to ensure that AMA pupils who are underachieving are motivated and encouraged to achieve at an appropriately high level.

#### **4.0 PROCEDURES/PROVISION**

We see provision for AMA pupils as the development of expertise and skills, not just knowledge acquisition. For the most part, provision for AMA pupils will be provided within classroom.

##### **4.1 In the classroom we will:**

- Value and utilise pupil's own interests and learning styles.
- Differentiate tasks to allow progress and challenge for all.
- Encourage the use of a variety of resources, ideas, methods and tasks that enable children to challenge their own learning.
- Provide a secure learning environment where risk taking is valued.
- Teach children to plan their own ideas and allow them to access higher order thinking skills.
- Involve pupils in working in a range of settings and combinations where they will learn best: individually, in pairs, in groups, as a class, cross-year and cross-school.
- Encourage children to ask questions about their learning and how they learn.
- Use whole school target setting and individual targets to monitor achievement and ensure above average progress.
- Celebrate creative and original thinking.
- Ensure that homework activities extend individual learning and motivate.
- Use Assessment for Learning to identify challenging next steps for learners.
- Arrange enrichment activities, such as visits by 'experts'.
- Provide opportunities to experience a range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning.

##### **4.2 As a school we will:**

- Monitor teacher's planning and teaching to ensure that good quality differentiation is leading to challenge for high attaining pupils.
- Offer a range of extra-curricular activities to children (including AMA) that give opportunities to further extend their learning in a range of activities (e.g. sporting and musical clubs, chess and arts-related clubs).
- Provide opportunities for pupils to work together across year groups, across school and with other local schools (e.g. through competitions, challenges).
- Keep up to date with developments in able pupil provision.
- Monitor the progress of high attainers and use resultant information in Pupil Progress meetings.
- Ensure relevant information is communicated to parents and during transition to a new school.

## **5.0 MONITORING**

### **5.1 AMA Co-ordinators**

Two teachers co-ordinate the provision and practice within the school for AMA children: one is responsible for KS1; the other is responsible for KS2. The co-ordinators' responsibilities include:

- Provide day-to-day support guidance and advice to staff.
- Regularly review the provision for identified pupils through monitoring teacher planning, interviewing pupils, monitoring teaching and work sampling.
- Support staff in differentiating tasks for AMA pupils.
- Keep up-to-date with developments in able child provision and external provision.
- Identify, with staff, children who will attend external events, such as master classes.
- Identify key characteristics of AMA pupils and provide staff training.
- Work with subject co-ordinators to ensure that the school has appropriate, challenging resources to support able learners.
- Monitoring the progress of more able and very able children through termly discussions with teachers.
- The co-ordinator collects samples of work from more able and very able children, in order to demonstrate the standards that they are achieving. We use these examples to inform the process of identification of more able and very able children.
- Liaising with parents, governors and LEA officers on issues related to more able and very able children.

### **5.2 All teachers will:**

- Ensure that pupils are set appropriately challenging tasks and learning opportunities.
- Use appropriate differentiation and take into consideration pupil's learning styles.
- Identify pupils who are high attaining in particular areas and track their progress.
- Work with teaching assistants to ensure effective provision.
- Provide appropriate resources that challenge.
- Monitor and evaluate practice and attend staff training.

## **6.0 SUCCESS CRITERIA**

- Children will make progress in their area(s) of strength.
- Teaching staff feel that they are supported in the identification of AMA pupils, and in the differentiation of teaching.
- AMA children are given a range of opportunities to develop their skills in and outside of the classroom.

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