



WALTHAMSTOW HALL
SEVENOAKS

MORE ABLE AND TALENTED POLICY

Rationale

Walthamstow Hall recognises that we have pupils with exceptional ability in our School community. We are committed to providing an environment which encourages all pupils to maximise their potential, and this very much applies to those pupils who display some form of exceptional ability.

Diversity is valued as a rich resource which supports the learning of all. In this School we recognise a pupil's right to a broad, balanced, relevant and challenging curriculum which is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents and personal qualities. We celebrate diversity and aim to identify, and minimise, any barriers to learning and participation that may be experienced by pupils, irrespective of age, ability, ethnicity, language and background.

'More able' pupils are those with strong intellectual and academic abilities who are working significantly above their peer group. These pupils cannot be catered for through 'usual' differentiation in the classroom (which is a basic expectation for higher ability pupils). 'Talented' pupils have a particular aptitude in a specific field, for example, music, art, design, drama, dance or sport. Their talent may therefore commonly be demonstrated outside of a classic classroom environment.

We acknowledge that more able and talented pupils possess exceptional ability in one or more of the following areas:

Area

- General intelligence.
- Specific academic areas.
- Visual and performing arts (art, music, drama, dance).
- Practical (design).
- Physical talent (sport).
- Outstanding leadership and social awareness.

More able and talented pupils require supportive teachers and carefully planned learning environments in order that their potential be translated into demonstrated ability and talent. They will be recognised through various forms of assessment. Walthamstow Hall is committed to identifying our more able and talented pupils so that their individual needs might be more appropriately met.

The named More Able and Talented Coordinator for the Senior School is **Mrs Katherine O'Donnell**.

The named More Able and Talented Coordinator for the Junior School is **Mrs Chrissie Conway**.

Parent Partnership

The knowledge, views and first-hand experience of parents is invaluable and parents are seen as partners in the educational process. All parents are welcome to contact the School if they have any concerns about the educational provision. Parents are also strongly encouraged to keep in regular contact with the School regarding their daughter's progress.

Identification of the able and talented

Everyone in School has a responsibility to recognise and value pupils' abilities. More able and talented pupils are identified as early as possible in order that they may be supported to develop successful learning patterns.

We note that more able and talented pupils can be:

- High achievers in all or most areas.
- High achievers in one area.
- Of high ability but with low motivation.
- Of good verbal ability but poor written skill.
- Very able but with a short attention span.
- Very able with poor social skills.
- Keen to disguise their abilities.
- Responsive to a wide range of learning styles.

We also need to be aware of potentially very able underachievers who may fall into the following categories:

- Bored and restless.
- Keen to steer the learning off-topic.
- Producing a standard of work which deteriorates over time.
- Keen to disguise their abilities from their peers.
- Fluent orally but producing poor written work.
- Friendly with older children and adults.
- Excessively self-critical, anxious and feeling rejected.
- Hostile towards authority.
- Quick thinking.
- Lacking the skills to learn academically.
- Showing aspirations below their potential.
- Over-reliant on teachers and reluctant to self-motivate.
- Unable or unwilling to think ahead.
- Underachieving in assessments but asking creative and searching questions in class.
- Abstract thinkers.

A more able or talented pupil will be identified using a variety of methods. The specific procedure will vary according to subject area but will include elements of the following:

- Quantitative data such as MIDYIS, ALIS and YELLIS, CATS data, tests, teacher assessments, examinations and external assessments (for example ABRSM and Trinity). Qualitative information such as classroom teacher assessments, nominations, observations of pupils working and scrutiny of work.

- Participation in the Scholarship programme.
- Awareness of pupil achievements in art, music, drama, dance, design and sport including through participation in extra-curricular activities within and outside of School.
- Representing the School in District, County and National sport competitions and events.

We recognise that relative ability changes over time so will move pupils on and off the register as appropriate. When considering removal from the register, care is taken to ensure pupils are not underperforming.

Provision for the more able and talented

We aim to:

- Ensure that opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into all our departmental schemes of work.
- Provide different work and work techniques for those pupils for whom usual differentiation is not enough.
- Maintain an ethos where excelling is celebrated.
- Recognise and praise achievement.
- Encourage all pupils to be independent learners.
- Be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism and social circumstances on learning and high achievement.
- Provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs.
- Provide a wide range of enrichment activities.
- Consistently provide work at an appropriate level.

Types of provision

Emotional Support and ensuring wellbeing and good self-esteem:

Pupils who are more able and talented are, by definition, out of sync with their peers. This may lead to social issues, friendship issues and bullying, impacting negatively on self-worth and self-esteem. The School will provide personalised support via mentoring and coaching that addresses the individual's needs but commonly focuses on how to be a child, set realistic expectations of oneself, ensure adequate downtime and also find value in others. The Scholarship offer gives pupils an opportunity for further enrichment and challenge.

Classroom differentiation:

We aim to ensure that:

- Teachers have high expectations.
- Tasks are designed to take account of and build upon levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding.
- There are planned extension opportunities, open-ended tasks or independently driven learning plans.
- There is access to higher-tier assessment papers.

School based provision:

This will vary according to subject area and is covered using a variety of methods:

- School clubs.
- School societies/councils.
- Fast tracking groups.
- Enrichment opportunities.
- Opportunities for performance.
- Specialist teaching.

Out of School provision (provided through external agencies):

- Weekend acceleration courses.
- Weekend and after-School enrichment courses.
- Easter Schools.
- National schemes/competitions/festivals.

Role of Teachers

Teachers will:

- Provide a classroom environment which encourages the development of pupil potential.
- Integrate methods of improving learning for able and talented pupils within their existing programmes.
- Collaborate with appropriate personnel to develop programmes to realise learning potential.
- Contribute to the collection of data for identification purposes.
- Monitor pupil progress.

Role of the More Able and Talented Coordinator

The More Able and Talented Coordinator will:

- Assist in the identification of more able and talented pupils.
- Keep a register of more able and talented pupils.
- Liaise with Heads of Department to identify strategies, activities and resources aimed to challenge and inspire more able and talented pupils.
- Help to increase teacher awareness of the needs of these pupils.
- Contribute to CPD for teachers in regard to the support of more able and talented pupils.
- Assess the performance of more able and talented pupils in external examinations in relation to the whole cohort.

Conclusion

All pupils deserve an equal opportunity to receive the best education possible. For those pupils with special abilities, provision needs to be made so that they can achieve their potential.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Walthamstow Hall policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by the Governing Body in the light of statutory requirements.

Reviewed Feb 2021
Next Review Feb 2022

Signed: Date:

Mrs J Adams
Chairman of the Governing Body

See also: Equality Policy