

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School



Learn, Live, Believe

More Able and Talented Policy Polisi mwy galluog a thalentog

**We are a Christ centred community,
reaching out to others.**

We learn, grow and celebrate together.

We bring our faith to life.

Rationale

At St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School we recognise that we have more able and talented children. Individual children should be encouraged to develop their attributes, skills and potential within a learning environment that embraces equality of opportunity and provision. Abilities and talents will emerge in a wide range of subjects and fields: it is important to develop the whole child. Schools and individuals can thrive in a culture of ambition and aspiration. All those people involved in the life and work of the school will be responsible for the implementation of this Policy.

AIMS:

- To identify more able and talented children (MAT) as early as possible;
- To promote the child's self- esteem;
- To recognise and meet the whole child's needs;
- To raise staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them;
- To address specific skills and talents;
- To widen opportunities and expectations by extending teaching and learning skills;
- To make use of the wider community to enhance learning opportunities;
- To celebrate the continued development of the school as a learning community.

DEFINITIONS:

- The term 'More able and Talented' encompasses learners who are more able across the curriculum, as well as those who show talent in one, or more, specific area.
- Identification is context driven and approximately 20% of the school population may be more able, while the top 2% could be considered exceptionally able.
- Children may be *more able and/ or talented* in diverse fields (academic, creative, sporting, social, leadership);
- *More able* children demonstrate a higher ability than average for the class and often require differentiated tasks and opportunities to learn through challenges.

IDENTIFICATION STRATEGIES:

A range of strategies, including professional judgement, classwork and test results are used to identify MAT children. The identification process is continuous and begins when a child is admitted to St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School. Many stakeholders are involved in the identification process, teaching staff, parents, peer and self.

Children undergo a baseline assessment within the first few weeks of joining the Nursery and Reception classes. This gives information about the child's developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We use this information when planning for individual needs.

As the children progress through the school, they are assessed regularly to ensure that they are making appropriate progress in line with their personal targets. MAT children are identified when they reach high levels of attainment across the curriculum, or in particular skills. The MAT list is a fluid one but once on the MAT list children will remain on it, even if their achievement or attainment lowers. They will move to a shadow list so that they will be tracked throughout the school as rates of learning change and factors can affect progress.

The children's progress is discussed with parents at termly parent/teacher consultation evenings.

MAT children may take part in activities outside school that:

- are very demanding on their time and physical resources. e.g. dancers, swimmers. This can lead to tiredness and under-achievement. It is vital that teachers work with parents and external coaches/tutors to implement appropriate strategies to deal with this.
- they consider to be potentially embarrassing to their peer group and/or teachers. They may wish to keep their involvement in the activity private even though it may demand a high level of time and commitment.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND AGENCIES:

The school is a member of NACE and staff use a range of teaching and learning resources produced by this organisation. We are currently working towards the NACE challenge award with our colleagues in the cluster and the school is part of a PLC for MAT with other Catholic Schools. The school is proactive in engaging with its feeder secondary school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

- Our teachers plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. We give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do and we achieve this in a variety of ways.
- A variety of differentiation strategies is used and challenging activities are provided that allow the pupils to respond at their own level.
- All schemes of work are skill based allowing flexibility in content and ease of differentiation. This allows MAT children to take ownership of their learning, making decisions about content, lines of enquiry and presentation.
- We are considering streaming the children in mathematics enabling teachers to plan extension activities for MAT children.
- MAT children are often used as tutors to other children or individual staff.
- Teachers make use of higher order questions and a variety of thinking tools to encourage and promote thinking. Problem solving opportunities are integrated across the curriculum and children receive weekly problem solving lessons in mathematics.
- We offer a range of extra- curricular activities for our children. These allow children to further extend their learning in a range of activities. Opportunities include a range of sporting, art and musical clubs. Peripatetic teachers provide tuition in a range of musical instruments. Children with musical talents perform in services and assemblies.
- Transfer and transition. All staff will have access to the MAT lists as they will be stored on the computer in a MAT folder in the Shared Documents. As the children move up through the school the staff will discuss all children in their class and MAT children will be highlighted.

Appendix 1

General checklist to help to identify a more able or talented child

- Possesses superior powers of reasoning, of dealing with abstractions, and generalising from specific facts.
- Originality and initiative in thinking and practical work.
- Information can be absorbed quickly and stored, sifted, analysed and organised to develop a point of view.
- Has a devastating appreciation of the weakness of other people including those in positions of authority, including teachers.
- Unusually high personal standards; frustration if they cannot achieve the excellence they demand of themselves; has a perfectionist approach.
- When interested, becomes absorbed for long periods and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change.
- Keen powers of observation, noting mismatches and analogies.
- Adapts information readily and uses them for purposes other than those for which they were intended.
- Constant repetition of already fluent skills will usually lead to loss of interest.
- Preference of company of older children and adults; boredom with the company and interests of peers.
- Has exceptional curiosity and constantly wants to know why.
- Has great interest in the nature of mankind and the universe.
- Has ability to lead and influence others - positively or negatively.
- Spots the direction of a story or situation well ahead of peers.
- Pursues a subject, or subjects in great depth.
- Unwilling to follow instructions for class tasks; preferring to do things in an individual manner

' More Effective Resources for Able & Talented Children, Barry Teare, 2001.

Appendix 2

Literacy

- Can orchestrate the various reading cues at an early age
- Show close reading skills and attention to detail
- Are active readers who can generalise from their reading experience
- Have fluency and breadth of reading
- Are able to read with more meaning, drawing on inference and deduction, can 'read between the lines'
- Draw out relationships between different texts read
- Show attention to spelling and meaning of words
- Approach writing tasks thoughtfully and with careful preparation
- Latch on quickly to the conventions of different types of writing
- Manipulate language, sentence structure and punctuation
- Are able to reflect on language and linguistic forms they encounter, having insight into their own abilities
- Use apt terminology and varies vocabulary
- Are sensitive to nuance of language use, use language precisely
- Have a well developed, sophisticated sense and appreciation of humour
- Are able to transfer skills across the curriculum
- Think in original ways and experiment with new styles

Mathematics

- Grasp the formal structure of a problem: can generate ideas for action
- Are able to generalise from examples
- Recognise pattern; can specialise and make conjectures
- Are able to generalise approaches to problem-solving
- Reason logically: can verify, justify and prove
- Use mathematical symbols confidently as part of the thinking process
- Think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches and are persistent
- May work backwards and forwards when solving a problem
- Rapidly grasp new material
- May not be exceptional in carrying out calculations, but may see calculations as detail and less important than the problem as a whole.

Religious Education

- Identify sources of religious belief and explain how distinctive religious beliefs arise
- Can recognise and express personal feelings and empathise with others
- Explain the meaning and purpose of a variety of forms of worship
- Identify similarities and differences between peoples' responses to social and moral issues because of their beliefs; are sensitive to social issues and concerned about community cohesion
- Explain what beliefs and values inspire and influence them and others
- Demonstrate how religious beliefs and teaching give some explanation of the purpose and meaning of human life
- Can use personal experience as shared learning with others
- Raise questions and see relationships between questions
- Are able to think independently and continue an argument

Science

- Recognise patterns and relationships in science data; can form a hypothesis based on valid evidence and draw conclusions
- Use subject vocabulary effectively
- Are aware of how the context influences the interpretation of science content
- Think flexibly, generalise ideas and adapt problem solving approaches
- Recognise and process data: can explain why data is unreliable, invalid or inaccurate
- Are able to evaluate findings and think critically
- Enjoy reasoning logically

Information technology

- Use ICT hardware and software independently
- Use ICT to support their studies in other subjects
- Use ICT to solve problems
- Consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use
- Consider the limitations of ICT tools and information sources

Geography

- Possess wide ranging general knowledge about the world
- Are enthusiastic observers of the world around them
- Are intrigued by the workings of their own environments
- Analyse confidently and draw conclusions

- Draw meaningful generalisations from information
- Appreciate varying viewpoints and attitudes
- Formulate opinions and use evidence to support own viewpoint
- Enjoy and can confidently use a wide range of visual resources including maps and photographs
- Have good information processing skills

History

- Are able to set both new and previously acquired information in a chronological framework
- Have a broad range of general and historical knowledge
- Show a keen awareness of the characteristics of different historical periods
- Make imaginative links between the topics studied and with other subjects in the curriculum
- Make suggestions which reflect independent thought concerning the causes and consequences of historical events
- Can talk about the significance of events, people and changes
- Use a range of historical sources, with confidence and perception
- Ask searching historical questions, engaging in increasingly independent historical enquiry and problem-solving exercises
- Show determination and perseverance in investigating topics

Art

- Analyse and interpret their observations and present them creatively
- Draw on existing knowledge, make connections and draw on comparisons with others' work
- Are enthusiastic and interested in the visual world
- Enjoy experimenting with materials, able to go beyond the conventional
- Can sustain concentration, constantly refining ideas
- Have confidence using a wide range of skills and techniques
- Quick to learn and transfer skills

Physical Education

- Use the body with confidence in differentiated, expressive and imaginative ways
- Are able to adapt, anticipate and make decisions
- Have a good sense of shape, space, direction and timing
- Have a good control of gross and fine body movements and can handle objects skilfully
- Produce a seamless fluency of movements

- Show high level of understanding of principles of health-related exercise and their application in a variety of activities
- Are able to use technical terms effectively, accurately and fluently
- Are able to perform advanced skills and techniques and transfer skills between activities
- Are able to analyse, evaluate their own and others' work using results to effect improvement

Welsh second language

- Show an interest and empathy to Welsh culture
- Show interest in the Welsh language around them
- Recognise grammatical patterns
- Use linguistic/non-linguistic clues to infer meaning
- Identify and memorise new sounds
- Are able to listen and to reproduce sounds accurately
- Are flexible in thinking, showing flair, intuition and creativity
- Extrapolate general rules from examples, can make connections

Music

- Hear music 'in the head'
- Have a strong musical memory
- Are particularly sensitive to melody, timbre, rhythms and patterns
- Respond emotionally to sounds
- Show a commitment to achieving excellence
- Have the motivation and dedication to persevere and practise.

Design and technology

- Readily accept and discuss new ideas
- Transfer and adapt ideas from the familiar to the new problem
- Are able to represent ideas aesthetically in a variety of ways: visual, spatial, verbal, mathematical
- Reflect and be constructively self-critical
- Independently research knowledge to solve problems
- Demonstrate skilfulness and ingenuity in manufacturing skills and techniques

Personal and Social Education

- Identify with the feelings of others
- Reflect on personal mistakes and rectify them
- Are self-confident

- Have self-control
- Use effective communication skills
- Build good relationships
- Are able to persuade and negotiate
- Work well collaboratively
- Lead and inspire others
- Are aware of social and environmental issues
- Enjoy community activities
- Are good in debate, discussion, role-play
- Display honesty and integrity
- Show initiative and persistence.

Appendix 3

Positive characteristics of young more able pupils

- May display musical / physical / artistic/ numerical/ mechanical or intellectual abilities of a high order
- May show a high level of curiosity
- May prefer to work independently
- May concentrate for long periods at a time
- Can work a problem through to its conclusion
- Can be creative or inventive
- Can apply ideas across a range of circumstances
- May enjoy puzzles / word games
- May have a more mature sense of humour
- May be articulate with good oral skills
- May have leadership qualities
- May enjoy a challenge

Negative characteristics of young more able pupils

- Can be intolerant of others
- Can show erratic behaviour - easily upset
- May have difficulty working / playing collaboratively
- May not enjoy written tasks
- May appear bored
- May be demanding of the teacher's time
- May dominate other children
- May have poor co - ordination.

Positive characteristics of older more able pupils

- May display musical/ physical/ artistic/ numerical/ mechanical or intellectual abilities of a high order
- Shows initiative in setting and completing own goals
- Can be original, creative or inventive
- Leaps quickly from concrete to abstract, able to make generalisations
- Shows advanced understanding and use of language
- Reads rapidly - quick mastery and recall of information
- May possess extensive general knowledge
- May ask provocative, searching questions and show concern over worldwide issues
- May have a wide range of interests / hobbies
- May prefer the company of older children and adults

- Can see humour in the unusual - appreciate verbal puns, jokes etc.
- May enjoy the challenge of open - ended, problem solving activities

Negative characteristics of older more able pupils

- May be absorbed in a private world
- Prefers to respond orally while written work may be poor / incomplete
- May appear bored and lethargic, lacking in motivation
- May lack self esteem and be intolerant of self and of others
- Can be abrasively humorous with an ironic perception of other people's weaknesses
- Able to manipulate others
- May have difficulty relating to peers and teachers

Able Children in Ordinary Schools, Deborah Eyre 2009

Appendix 4

Checklist for an Effective Learning Environment

Talking about Learning - linked to our Teaching and Learning Policy and Key Skills Framework

- We establish a culture in which wrong answers are productive opportunities for learning (happy accidents!), and in which creative thinking is actively encouraged
- We model the process of talking about how learning takes place, rather than just what is being learned
- We help learners with the language needed to discuss the process of their learning
- We ask learners, including the more able and talented, what helps them to learn effectively.
- We help learners to become aware of their preferred learning styles
- We provide significant opportunities for learners to practise the learning styles that they find less effective

Questions and Challenge - linked to our Teaching and Learning Policy and Key Skills Framework

- Creative thinking is encouraged by asking open - ended questions to which there are no right answers
- Learners are encouraged to ask questions of themselves, each other and other adults in the classroom
- Learners are involved in self assessment and peer assessment
- The work of all learners, including those who are more able and talented, are on display to raise the expectations of both learners and teachers
- The school involves teaching assistants and work placement students in the provision for more able and talented learners.
- The school liaises with local resource services to expand learning opportunities for all learners, including those who are more able and talented
- The school will develop a resource collection, including lists of web resources for learners and teachers in classrooms.

Monitoring and Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the MAT co-ordinator and the Headteacher and will be updated in response to any new information received.

Signature of Headteacher: Date:

Signature of chairman of governors: Date: