

HITHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE



ADVANCED ABILITY POLICY

'Our vision is to create a school community where everyone feels valued, has the opportunity to explore and develop their strengths and is able to participate in new experiences. We aim to become an inspirational school to produce good citizens for the future in an atmosphere that promotes confidence, high academic achievement, physical health and emotional well-being.'

Document Control

Change Record

Date	Author	Version	Change Reference
Feb 2015	Jef Fox	0.1	Update from previous policy Agreed at Achievement Committee and at Full GB

Distribution

Reviewers	Approvers	Distribution
Achievement Committee	Full Governing Body	

AIMS

With this vision in mind, the aim of this document is to assist a consistent approach to the identification and support of the **Advanced Ability* (gifted/talented)** child at Hitherfield through:

- An agreed, shared definition of the terms "gifted", "talented" and "advanced ability" (G&T/AA)
- Identifying such pupils early
- Celebrating the talents and abilities displayed by all our pupils
- Enabling pupils from all backgrounds to make full use of their abilities and raise their expectations accordingly

- Providing all pupils with an enriched, differentiated and challenging curriculum
- Meeting pupils' needs with a range of appropriate strategies
- Providing opportunities for pupils to work to an increased level and pace towards their full potential
- Raising staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them
- Creating opportunities for pupils to show and develop their gifts and talents
- Making use of links with other schools and the wider community to enhance learning opportunities
- Appointing a Gifted and Talented/Advanced Ability Co-ordinator who will take responsibility to monitor the register; policy; provision and professional development needs of the staff, and co-ordinate the above

THE TERM

The term '**Gifted and Talented**' at Hitherfield has been replaced with the term '**Advanced Ability**'.

This term refers to children who achieve, or have the potential to achieve, a level significantly above the average for their year group throughout the school.

Pupils recognised with Advanced Ability can be identified at any age, or stage, of their school career, as we encourage the appreciation that children develop at different rates at different times. We also recognize that children, who may have additional support needs in some areas, may also have advanced ability in others.

The term '**gifted**' generally refers to the top 5% of pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects.

The term '**talented**' generally refers to the top 5% of pupils who may excel in areas requiring visual or spatial skills such as in PE, drama or art.

Hitherfield has used the term '**Advanced Ability**' to include both strains of ability termed as Gifted and Talented.

The term, Advanced Ability may be used for children who are working above age related expectations, or who have the potential to do so, in academic or practical subject areas within the school.

COLLECTION AND RECORDING OF ADVANCED ABILITY

Our /Advanced Ability cohort is identified under the following headings:

- **Advanced Academic Ability**

Children demonstrating **Advanced Academic Ability** are assessed as being at least one year ahead of their peers in Reading, Writing, Mathematics or Science. This information will be gained from the school's assessment data banks gathered termly, three times per academic year, for Reading, Writing and Mathematics and twice each academic year for Science.

- **Advanced Physical Ability**

Children demonstrating **Advanced Physical Ability** are assessed through observation at school during PE sessions and playground activities. This is supplemented by the collection of data relating to proficiencies outside of school. For example, high levels of success at a swimming club, or inclusion in an authority wide team for any sporting/physical activity.

- **Advanced Spatial/Mechanical Ability**

Children demonstrating **Advanced Spatial/Mechanical Ability** are assessed in the areas of **Design Technology, Information Communication Technology/Programming, Construction** and **working with puzzles**. This assessment will be achieved through observation and recording significant incidences in the classroom or playground and from information regarding specific children's out of school interests. For example if a child has been selected as a school Digital Leader or talks frequently of projects completed outside of school and is able to show evidence.

- **Advanced Social Ability**

Children demonstrating **Advanced Social Ability** are assessed through observation at school when **communicating** in a variety of settings including class debates or higher order thinking activities such as **Philosophy for Children (P4C)** or **Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)** sessions; when adopting **leadership** roles during whole school, whole class or group activities; or when

exhibiting high levels of **emotional literacy** and/or **empathy** at any time throughout their time in school.

- **Advanced Aesthetic Ability**

Children demonstrating **Advanced Aesthetic Ability** are assessed through observation and assessment at school and external recommendation in the areas of **Art, Music, Drama** and **Dance**. In each area there would be further sub-classifications to indicate if a child was demonstrating Advanced Ability in a specific area of Advanced Aesthetic Ability. For example, in the area of music, it would require the additional sub-classification of whether the ability was demonstrated in singing or instrument playing and which instrument/s. Further sub-classifications would be necessary for Art; for example, to indicate whether the child demonstrated Advanced Ability in drawing, painting, sculpting or any other visual mediums such as film or photography.

IDENTIFICATION

We will use a wide range of identification strategies and the identification process will be on-going.

Identification will usually be made by:

- Staff nomination from observation in class, in the playground or during extra-curricular activities and clubs
- Test results/teacher assessments/pupil's work
- Parent information
- Pupil information about their activities and interests provided
- Information gained through home learning work
- Information provided by external agencies (e.g. sports organisations, music tutors, etc)

THE ADVANCED ABILITY REGISTER

All children, deemed to be displaying developed abilities in any area, will be placed on a register known as '**The Advanced Ability Register**'. Pupil names can be added at any time.

However, the school's policy will ensure Class teachers regularly review the abilities of the pupils in their class and provide updated information for the Advanced Ability register annually.

In order to assist the gathering of data, a 'mail slot' will be available in the staffroom for **all** members of staff to make contributory notes about abilities and talents

observed at any time throughout the school day. This would include the child's name, class and area of Advanced Ability and supporting observational evidence.

The register will be collated electronically on the school's current data collecting systems and be made available to all staff for reference and guidance for planning and provision.

PLANNING AND PROVISION

As Hitherfield values all children equally and endeavours to ensure that each child has the opportunity to realise his/her potential in a challenging and supportive environment. The school shall endeavour, through the promotion of a fully inclusive, broad and creative curriculum, to allow all children the opportunity to flourish and possibly exhibit previously undiscovered abilities.

Teachers will therefore plan and provide:

- A differentiated curriculum with a balance of whole class, group and individual teaching. This flexibility will also include the promotion of mixed ability groupings to encourage the 'cross pollination' of ideas and dissemination of abilities.
- Sequences of teaching and learning with clear stages of development
- Activities that are open ended with a 'high ceiling' to enable all children the potential to extend and be challenged
- Problem solving and investigation to develop reasoning and thinking skills
- Activities that encourage enquiry and higher order thinking skills
- Teacher questioning that is open-ended to develop explorative thinking
- Differentiation through pace, task, dialogue, support, outcome, resource, content and/or responsibility
- Opportunities to be creative and productive
- Competition against self through target setting and challenges
- A variety of extension and enrichment activities

EXTENDING AND ENRICHING THE CURRICULUM

Through providing an extended and enriched curriculum we will develop the abilities of our more able students while providing opportunities for all.

This will be done by:

- Quality first teaching in every class that meets the needs of all advanced abilities**
- Providing a range of after school activities and clubs
- Providing opportunities for performance

- Taking part in inter-school competitions and festivals
- Access to visiting experts and range of materials and resources
- Visits/workshops from poets, writers, artists, musicians, sports people, journalists etc.
- Use of subject specialists from within and outside the school
- Contact with outside agencies or secondary schools for advice or use of resources
- Coordination of peer observations by teachers to promote examples of good practice throughout the school

ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF PUPIL PROGRESS

The progress of children identified as being of Advanced Ability is monitored by the Assessment Co-ordinator and the Advanced Ability Coordinator but the recording of pertinent data is the responsibility of all teachers. Teacher assessment, observation, testing and target tracking are employed to monitor children's achievements and progress and ensure they are reaching their targets.

ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF SCHOOL PRACTICE

The Advanced Ability Co-ordinator will be responsible, with regular consultation with other key members of staff and School Improvement Leaders, for coordinating identification and provision for the Advanced Ability children.

The Advanced Ability co-ordinator will also be responsible for:

Monitoring the maintenance of the Advanced Ability Register and keeping it updated

- Liaison with other School Improvement Leaders in raising staff awareness of possible support strategies
- Supporting staff in identifying pupils
- Providing support and guidance to staff on teaching and learning strategies and Continued Professional Development opportunities.
- Monitoring planning and pupil work to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being provided
- Evaluating and feeding back to Senior Managers on teaching practice and provision for identified pupils across the school
- Liaising with parents/carers
- Developing, reviewing and monitoring the effectiveness of the school policy

All Staff will be responsible for

- Identification and nomination of children with Advanced Ability
- Monitoring pupil progress

- Keeping a record of the achievements of their Advanced Ability pupils and updating data regularly
- Planning appropriate activities

****Meeting the needs of children exhibiting Advanced Ability:** [b](#)

At Hitherfield we provide enrichment for our Advanced Ability children in three ways/types.

Type 1 enrichment is concerned with provision beyond the regular school curriculum. Some examples are drama and music performances, both in school and visits to theatres or other performance venues. There are also many after school clubs on offer and 'Golden Time' choices to be made on Friday afternoons. (Teachers need to be aware of which children select which activities or need nominating to pursue them.)

In addition there are numerous field trips in, and beyond, London taking full advantage of what is available to enrich the learning opportunities of our students. This is further augmented through arranging visits to the school from a variety of

individuals with particular abilities, such as authors, athletes or educational professionals to supplement what is being taught in school.

All of this is supported through our planned topic webs for each year group and the practice of immersion into the units being taught. This allows for our children to have had the opportunity to discuss, research and develop their interest in the topic before, during and after the event.

Type 2 enrichment is relevant to the development of our students' independent learning skills.

Children, at Hitherfield, are given opportunities to research independently or as members of mixed or similar ability groups. All children are taught how to use the Internet safely and are allowed to access the technology available to assist their research. Each class has at least one desktop computer in the classroom to support this and timetabled ICT slots each week. They also have access to well resourced class libraries and a school library equipped with a bank of desktop computers. There are also a range of artefacts relevant to the topics taught in their year group available at school in the resources area.

Children are also encouraged to supplement their learning around a particular topic through homework assignments and 'show and tell' opportunities.

Furthermore, children at Hitherfield are given opportunities to develop their critical and creative thinking skills through debate and discussion either through classroom discussions in groups or with 'talk partners', Philosophy for Children (P4C) or Circle Time.

Children are also taught, for example, how to plan and carry out an interview formulating open ended questions that require more than a 'yes' or 'no' response. They are also given opportunities to conduct interviews with each other through role play or are allowed to interview relevant members of staff or visitors.

The children are encouraged to develop their written and oral communication skills throughout the teaching program and using the technology available, for example blogging, is endorsed to communicate beyond the immediate school environment.

Throughout this type of enrichment our children are continually supported with the development of their listening, social and interpersonal skills. Our students benefit from these experiences by becoming more able to work effectively as a group member and being engaged with an agreed goal or outcome.

Type 3 enrichment is where the child can utilise what has been gained from involvement in types 1 and 2.

This type of enrichment is most salient to the Advanced Ability child and is dependent on the child being the guided, motivational instigator of what they wish to study and produce. This can be achieved through homework and/or extension activities or enrolment in an after- school club. This could be along the lines of producing a set design for a play they have recently watched; writing in the style of an author they have had access to; creating learning materials for younger students around the topic or designing and developing an information package for a target audience.

In each case, the child would be expected to present their finished article to a target audience . For example, sharing in assembly or showing learning materials to a younger year group.

Useful links:

[Effective Provision](#)

[General Practice](#)

[Science](#)

[NACE](#)

[How Do You Mean: Literacy](#)

[In Between The Lines \(Higher Level Literacy\)](#)

[Philosophy for Children \(P4C\)](#)

[SAPERRE](#)

[More Able Maths Extensions](#)

[Archived National Strategy More Able Mathematicians](#)

[Mike Gershon](#) (need login)

[Mike Gershon guide:](#)

Also further resources on Google Shared Drive.

Challenging more able pupils

So how do you push the thinking of more able pupils in the context of whole-class teaching?

Socratic questioning

Socrates, an Athenian philosopher born in 469BC, appears in the dialogues of Plato interrogating his fellow citizens to draw out the assumptions, errors and misconceptions in their thinking. We can use Socrates' methods in the classroom to challenge the thinking of all pupils – particularly the most able.

There are four roles that Socrates takes on when asking questions: the gadfly, the stingray, the midwife and the ignoramus. Teachers can flit between these in order to question the views, opinions and judgements held by more able pupils.

- **The gadfly:** Mimic the practice of the gadfly, which nips away at larger animals. This involves asking lots of little questions intended to push thinking and avoid sloppiness: "What do you mean by that?"; "But, what if...?"; "What evidence do you have?"; "Does that always apply?"; "How can you be certain that is true?".
- **The stingray:** Administer a shock to pupils' traditional way of thinking in the same way a stingray unleashes its sting: "Imagine if X was not the case, what then?"; "What if everything you've said was turned on its head?"; "What if a great change happened?".
- **The midwife:** Ask questions that help give birth to ideas: "That's an interesting idea; could you explain it a bit more?"; "How might that affect things?"; "What made you think of that idea?".
- **The ignoramus:** Emulate a character who has never encountered the topic you are discussing and play dumb to encourage explanation: "What does that mean?"; "I don't understand – can you start from the beginning?"; "So, do you mean that...?".

Listen to what the pupil says and look for ways to respond in one of the above guises. Fix on to a pupil's assertions and question them. This might help you to identify inaccurate use of a concept or over-reliance on a weak piece of analysis.

Evaluation

This is all about making judgements: "What do you think and why?"; "Is this better than that, or vice versa?"; "Which option should we go for and what reasons do you have to support your choice?".

Really good evaluation demonstrates a mastery of the topic. Pupils will be able to highlight the strengths and limitations of the issue before making a judgement about what ought to be done or what they believe is the best perspective on the matter.

Nearly every activity you do in the classroom can be supplemented by an evaluation task, directly or tangentially associated with the topic.

Use evaluation command words – appraise, argue, assess, critique, defend, evaluate, judge, justify and value – to frame questions and tasks for pupils who finish before their peers. Or build them into your PowerPoint or interactive

whiteboard slides as extensions. You will then have them to hand as soon as pupils finish the main work you have set.

If you make regular recourse to evaluation questions and tasks, pupils' ability to make reasoned judgements will improve and this will trickle into the rest of the work that they produce.

Critical thinking

This involves analysing the issue and reflecting on the best way to tackle it. It can be challenging for more able pupils because it asks them to alter their mindsets and to think differently.

- **Analyse meaning:** Have pupils analyse the accuracy and precision of their writing and speech. When they have finished an activity, ask them to review what they have done. How accurately did they convey the meaning they intended? How precise were they in their choice and use of words? How could they have said the same thing but more simply? Get them to amend or redo their work accordingly.
- **Self-criticism:** Stretch pupils' thinking by asking them to reread what they have written critically. Ask them to revisit the work and develop a series of questions in connection with it. These will focus on issues thrown up by the text or questions that have not been answered in the text but ought to have been.
- **Challenging debate:** Ask pupils to look through their work and identify every instance where they have put forward an argument or a view. They should then come up with two pieces of evidence and two examples (additional to anything in the text) that could be used to support their argument. This will stretch their thinking and improve their arguments.

For further ideas on how to stretch and challenge more able pupils, see Mike Gershon's Challenge Toolkit resource at www.tes.co.uk/mikegershon. (He has written seven books on pedagogy, all of which are [available on Amazon](#).)

Technique checklist

Evaluation keywords:

- Appraise
- Argue
- Assess

- Critique
- Defend
- Evaluate
- Judge
- Justify
- Value

Socratic questioning roles:

- The gadfly
- The stingray
- The midwife
- The ignoramus

Stretch and challenge through planning:

- How difficult is the content?
- What are you asking pupils to do?
- Will pupils be learning actively?
- How will you adapt the length of tasks?
- Do pupils know why they are doing the work?