

# St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School



## Highly Able Policy

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus  
as we learn, love and grow together”*

***SCHOOL’S OWN VERSION***

Reviewed: Spring 2019  
To be reviewed: Spring 2024  
Reviewed by : Teaching and Learning committee  
Coordinator: Rosemary Sherry

Signature:

Chair of Governors

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Date ratified: 10<sup>th</sup> December 19

## **POLICY FOR THE EDUCATION OF HIGHLY ABLE CHILDREN**

The staff of St Vincent de Paul School believe that all children should be educated in a way which enables them to work at the highest level consistent with their ability and interest, both for the good of others and for their own satisfaction. We recognise that those of exceptional high ability, in whatever area of human endeavour, require rich and challenging experiences to achieve their potential. We acknowledge our responsibility to identify and make appropriate provision for these children. We believe that this provision for more able and talented children is not in itself separate from other activities of the school but an integral part of it. Our approach is in accordance with that of Mike Tomlinson (former Chief Inspector of Schools) who states

*"If you are willing to deal effectively with the needs of more able pupils you will raise the achievement of all pupils."*

*Meeting the needs of your most able pupils (2006)*

### **1. Aims**

- to develop, implement and evaluate a coherent policy for highly able children and to ensure the Staff, Governors, parents and children have a strong sense of ownership of this policy
- to provide a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum for able and talented children
- to make use of differentiated educational provision in the classroom through curriculum enrichment and extension
- to challenge the more able child whilst at the same time to provide opportunities to work with peers in ways that lead to social and emotional maturity and which help them to build strong relationships with others
- to make education an enjoyable, exciting and worthwhile experience for highly able children.

### **2. Definition**

In the knowledge and awareness that our definition of highly able children influences subsequent provision for these children and that there is no universal consensus, as a staff we have reached an agreement about the types of children who might be considered "highly able" or "talented." A broad, general definition which covers potential achievement in intellectual ability, creativity, leadership, visual and performing arts, physical and psycho-motor ability is that of David George -

*"Gifted and talented children are those who in some aspect of human potential and/or achievement are far more advanced beyond that which would normally be expected."*

*The Challenge of the Able Child (2997:99)*

Factors such as motivation, task commitment, appropriate opportunities, home background and parental support influence achievement. We need therefore, to consider under-achievers in our definition. We believe that this inclusive view is consistent with our aim of helping all children to achieve their potential.

### **3. Identification and Monitoring**

We shall, by suitable means, identify children of exceptional ability or talent. Such children shall be monitored throughout their time at school, and shall be provided with an educational experience which will challenge them and stimulate their development.

Very able children are usually identified by the class teacher, and observations are shared and discussed with parents, the Headteacher and co-ordinator. Appropriate action is then agreed and undertaken. Referral to outside agencies may take place with parental permission.

In order to identify specific abilities and talents of many children rather than labelling a particular group of pupils as "highly able" we use a wide definition of "ability" (as outlined above) and a wide range of methods of identification from a variety of sources including tests and assessments. We also take into account information provided by those who know the child best, parents/carers, staff and the wider community. Our identification systems are ongoing, so allowing for recognition at any point in a child's development; they are working documents which actively influence provision in classrooms.

### **4. Personal and Social Education**

Our philosophy respects the growth and unique nature of each child in the community. In our school we seek to develop the child's self-esteem through:

- an appreciation of social values
- a sense of right and wrong
- respect for the rights of others
- constructive contribution to group activities
- a willingness to share
- conscientiousness
- truthfulness
- good relationships
- self-respect
- sense of humour.

The pupil's self-concepts, self-esteem, moral thinking, attitudes, values, social and personal adjustment have a direct influence on achievement.

### **5. Organisation of Provision**

Within the context of the school curriculum the most significant structures from the perspective of more able pupil provision is pupil grouping. More able pupils ideally need opportunities to work in mixed ability contexts and with others of like ability.

Some children may need a more individual approach, for example:

- when a child has outstanding ability in one area and may benefit from working with older children
- when a child has both outstanding strengths but also severe weaknesses in language organisation
- when a child is outstanding generally in comparison to others in the class.

The needs of these children should be considered separately, and an appropriate response made in consultation with parents. Possible provision for such children also includes mentoring, small group withdrawal and partial acceleration.

Whatever provision is made, the child should feel comfortable with that provision, the provision should be sustainable, the provision should take account of both intellectual and emotional development, and issues of continuity and progression need to be addressed.

## **6. Classroom Provision**

Planning, Assessment for Learning and Assessing Pupil Progress are at the heart of good classroom provision.

## **7. Planning**

Planning for more able pupils is a part of effective differentiation and involves making sure that they are sufficiently challenged by the work set. Enrichment of the curriculum for more able pupils may be defined as follows:

- is a broadening and deepening of the learning experience
- provides experiences and activities beyond the regular curriculum
- develops the intellectual gifts and talents of the most able
- stresses qualitative development of thinking skills rather than quantitative accumulation of facts
- emphasises the process of learning rather than content
- can be horizontal, exploring bodies of knowledge that are not frequently touched upon in the school common core curriculum
- can be vertical, developing the skill of quantitative thinking which implies a facility with subject matter and ability to understand basic principles and to make generalisations
- generally these children should do less and learn more. For example, it is generally preferable for a pupil to find three possible solutions to a problem than to solve three problems of a similar nature.

All our enrichment activities should be planned and designed with the following objectives in mind:

- content within and beyond the National Curriculum
- exposure to a variety of subjects
- student-selected content
- high content complexity
- maximum achievement in basic skills
- creative thinking and problem solving
- motivation.

## **8. Assessment**

Effective assessment enables pupils to start at a higher level and so encounter more challenging work. Less formal opportunities such as brainstorming, concept-mapping, pre- and post-assessment sheets and quizzes are all ways in which pupils

can demonstrate the level of their knowledge and understanding and so enable work to be targeted more effectively.

## **9. Extra-Curricular Activities**

As a school we provide opportunities for children to develop potential in a wide range of areas such as netball, football, art, athletics, dance, drama, cricket, gardening, peripatetic music, cooking and Choi Kwang Do. Opportunities may be available for identified pupils to run clubs for their peers if appropriate.

## **10. The role of the Inclusion Coordinator**

The Inclusion Coordinator (Mrs Sherry) is available for consultation by staff. She in turn liaises with colleagues, parents, outside agencies and receiving schools. The Inclusion Coordinator also builds up resources, keeps abreast of current educational initiatives and thinking.

## **11. Process for review and development of the Pupils**

This is an on-going process which involves monitoring of:

- human resources available (using any extra support e.g. voluntary help)
- school/class system of "marking" and "reward" and testing
- systems for the tracking of individual exceptionally able pupils
- staff development and deployment which demonstrate an awareness of able pupils
- budget allocation for materials and resources