

# Brimsham Green

## Gifted and Talented Policy

### September 2007 – 08

#### Rationale

Brimsham Green School recognises that all students have the potential to have a particular gift or talent. Brimsham Green School recognises the need to provide a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum to identify and extend Gifted and Talented students, ensuring all students individual needs are identified for students to be given the opportunity to maximize their potential, making education an enjoyable, exciting and worthwhile experience.

#### School aims

- to meet the needs of Gifted and Talented students the school will endeavour to provide;
- an environment in which achievement in all activities is valued and celebrated,
- an environment in which students can achieve excellence without embarrassment or fear of recrimination or stereotyping;
- awareness of the particular educational needs which gifted and talented students have, in order for them to reach their potential,
- strategies within and out of the classroom to enable able students to cope socially and emotionally with their skills or attributes, and which will promote the development of self-esteem and self-confidence,
- opportunities for our able students to reach their full potential by providing a sufficiently challenging curriculum,
- encouragement to use high order thinking skills, pose hypotheses and facilitate the development of their own enquiry skills,
- access to differentiated provision through enrichment and extension activities in all subjects,
- to provide a partnership with parents of these students to ensure good communication and support.

## **Gifted and Talented South Gloucestershire Guidelines**

### **Definitions of Gifted and Talented Pupils (currently being reviewed December)**

There are many definitions of Gifted and Talented pupils. None of them are precise. Guidance in South Gloucestershire uses the nationally adopted terminology in relation to pupils, who are referred to as being 'more able, very able or exceptionally able'.

### **Gifted and Talented**

Nationally, and in South Gloucestershire LEA, gifted pupils are defined as having academic ability in one or more subject areas, whereas talented pupils are those with ability in creative arts or sports.

### **More able, very able and exceptionally able pupils**

More Able	Pupils attain above average standards. For example, they perform above national expectations in NC test or reach levels beyond what is or could be expected in other curriculum areas or in creative or sporting fields.
Very Able	Pupils reach standards in their academic, artistic, sporting or other achievements which are in the top 10% of all performance.
Exceptionally Able	Pupils reach standards in their academic, artistic, sporting or other achievements which are in the top 2% of all performance.

### **In Summary**

Gifted and Talented = very able including exceptionally able

Gifted and Talented pupils are those (approximately 10%) of pupils who are very able in one or more subjects, in creative arts, sports or other areas, INCLUDING those (approximately 2%) who are exceptionally able.

These are pupils who achieve, or who have the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of the average for their year group in their school.

**In defining Gifted and Talented pupils, the following issues should be taken into account:**

- The number and abilities of Gifted and Talented pupils will not be the same in every school.
- Schools may use this guidance to adopt their own definitions as outlined in their policy for Gifted and Talented pupils. Consequently, the dividing line between ‘more able’, ‘very able’, and ‘exceptionally able’ pupils cannot be defined precisely.
- A pupil may demonstrate high ability over many areas of the curriculum. Equally, a pupil may be considered very able in only one area.
- Gifted and Talented pupils may not wish to be identified as such by their peers or by adults.

All the pupils who are on the BGS G&T list have been identified by departments.

Government guidance used to refer to G&T pupils as those who are likely to be level 7+. There was also a requirement for a school to identify a least 10% of the N.O.R as being G&T – however, many schools do not have anything like this proportion in that ability range (& therefore would be discrimination against pupils who are able, but do not necessarily reach this arbitrary benchmark). It has also been argued that some pupils may have significant ability in one subject/skill but not in others, and that under the previous criteria, would not have been recognised.

The information submitted by departments is collated and put onto SIMS. A small proportion of pupils have been nominated in several subject areas (would have formed the original G&T group – but we would fall far short of the 10% benchmark). The majority are nominated in only 1 or 2 ‘gifted’ or ‘talented’ areas e.g. a pupil may be low ability in Maths but have real talent in playing a sport or musical instrument. Hence, our G&T list (on ‘pupil information’ notice board in staffroom, with HoYs & also SIMS, as well as on ‘k’ drive) appears large in terms of the number of pupils, but in reality the multi-discipline G&T pupils are very few in number.

As we submit the information to the LA, we also inform parents – they are also asked to add further depth to our records on SIMS by submitting details of further activities/clubs which their son/daughter belong to.

**How do we identify high ability pupils?**

Subject teachers commonly become aware of a pupil’s high ability from evidence accruing from a wide variety of sources.

- KS2 intake information for Year 7 is available on pupils with *specific learning aptitudes*.
- Subject teacher observation of performance of all children on task.
- Parental information direct to subject teacher or tutor.
- Peer group comments.
- Pupils’ self-presenting behaviours.
- Results of tests and assessments through the year.
- Evidence from extra-curricular activities.
- Comments from other subject teachers.

These forms of evidence enable teachers to identify most able pupils in their group within a few weeks of teaching them for the first time. However some pupils' potential may not be picked up so quickly.

The following resources are available within the school and can prove helpful in the process:

- Subject checklists, where appropriate, ensure a wider, more complete coverage.
- General characteristics inventory may also assist deliberations.

***However we believe the best method of identification is provision i.e. provide challenging resources and opportunities and measure pupil response.***

### **How do we provide for Able Pupils?**

We use a battery of differentiation strategies to meet the needs of able pupils. The strategies listed below are already in use across the curriculum. Individual faculties decide which are and which are not appropriate for their subjects. They are detailed here only as a checklist to raise awareness. The teacher can often differentiate most effectively for able pupils by brief inter-changes with them: asking probing questions, suggesting an alternative presentation, coaching, encouraging individual responses, floating off higher vocabulary. OFSTED recognise all these as valid differentiation strategies, but say, where used, they should be indicated in lesson plans.

#### **At Key Stage 3:**

- Pre-tests may be used to discover prior knowledge of a topic before embarking on it.
- Skipping of lower level comprehension tasks may often be appreciated.
- Compacting the core of a learning module allows more time for extension.
- Focussing on higher order thinking skills accelerates progress.
- Organising Supported Self-Study, in just one or two modules, using a range of extra resources, such as those provided in the Study Centre, can be an enriching experience.
- Differentiated homework tasks provide more challenge.
- Opportunities from time to time, for working with others of like ability, in the class and if blocking allows between classes boost confidence.
- Setting according to ability may be appropriate in some subjects.
- After school or lunchtime clubs may encourage creativity and commitment.
- Individual Education Plans may help those with one strong talent area.
- Occasional withdrawal for mentoring can sort out skill deficits or social problems or even raise aspirations e.g. Aim Higher.
- Performances, exhibitions and inter-school competitions can be seen as rewards as well as means to further achievement.
- Enrichment days/weekends as well as summer schools provide in-depth opportunities.

### **At KS4 and Post 16:**

- ❖ What happens at KS3 in terms of developing advanced skills, higher thinking strategies, positive attitudes and good study habits is obviously crucial to successful take-off at KS4 and post-16. We believe that in the majority of cases GCSE and AS/A2 courses do provide sufficient challenge, purpose and achievement for Able Pupils at these stages of their school life. At KS4 and Post-16 the key issue becomes ensuring that what could be 'A' or 'B' grades do not end up as 'C' or 'D' grades.
- ❖ The school is an institutional member of N.A.C.E (National Association for Able Children in Education). Membership provides new ideas and access to new resources. It also ensures that we keep up-to-date with good practice.

### **How do we monitor Able Pupils' progress?**

As for all of our pupils, not just able pupils, we use statistical data to study performance. Data from all three Cognitive Ability test scores in Years 7 & 9, end of KS3 results, FFT at KS4 and ALIS at Post-16 informs our consideration of discrepancies between potential and performance. Academic monitoring meetings for each year group have therefore as one of their aims discovering those able pupils who for a variety of reasons may be underachieving. This in turn sharpens the focus of our provision.

Nominations by subject teachers can result in a Faculty list of able pupils in each year group, including under-achieving able pupils to aid planning. This can then generate a whole school register, available in the staff-room, to encourage discussion of a target and review model. The needs of able pupils should appear on Faculty and Curriculum Committee agendas.

### **How do we celebrate Able Pupils' achievements?**

This varies from subject to subject. Achievement can, of course, be its own reward. Verbal praise one to one and letters of commendation to parents are nearly always appreciated; publishing their work and display around the school may be appropriate. Prize giving, such as book token, is occasionally organised. The main method of whole school recognitions is through the colours system in PE and the Awards Evening for all subjects; these have themselves become very successful and memorable events.

### **NB: Networking School Policies**

This G&T Policy document has strong links with, and should be read alongside, those already existing on Differentiation, Homework and Literacy.

### **Brimsham Green School Gifted and Talented Definition**

Brimsham Green School recognises the importance of having a clear and concise definition. The government guidelines state that there should be between 5 – 10% of a school population within this category.

## **Brimsham Green School Identification Strategies**

Brimsham Green recognises the importance of using a variety of strategies to identify gifted and talented students and it is important that all the individual areas of the school both academic and pastoral, plan their own strategies to identify these students. Brimsham Green will refer to gifted and talented pupils as Able pupils, this is in line with the South Gloucestershire policy document.

### **Characteristics to look for in able students**

Able students are a diverse group and their range of attainment will vary. Some will do well in tests, others will show talent in other areas such as leadership, high level practical skills or creative thought.

It is important to recognise that not all able students are obvious achievers, many under achieve: their potential masked by factors such as frustration, low self esteem, lack of challenge, or low teacher/parent expectation. Some may have learning difficulties that obscure their gift or talent. A student may fulfil many of the criteria for gifted and talented yet under perform at school.

The list below gives areas that may be recognised in able students. It suggests generic characteristics to help identify these students; the list should not be used in isolation but with data, teacher intuition, parental and student input to distinguish those who are able at Brimsham Green.

### **Able students are likely to:**

- Think quickly and accurately
- Work systematically
- Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations
- Communicate their thoughts and ideas well
- Be determined, diligent and interesting in uncovering patterns
- Achieve, or show potential, in wide range of contexts
- Be particularly creative
- Show great sensitivity or empathy
- Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill
- Make sound judgements
- Be outstanding leaders or team members
- Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects within a particular subject or aspects of work
- Have a very retentive memory
- Be extremely curious and can concentrate for long periods on a subject of interest
- Have a wide general knowledge and interest in the world
- Enjoy problem solving, often missing out the intermediate stages in an argument and making original connections
- Have an unusual and vivid imagination

- Read from an early age/ have a high reading age – see literacy profile information
- Show strong feeling and opinions and has an odd sense of humour
- Set themselves high standards and are perfectionists
- Lose interest when asked to do more of the same

### **Some demonstrate negative characteristics**

- Their written work may be poor
- They may be lazy and lethargic or daydream and appear inattentive
- They may spend a great deal of time decorating their notebook
- They may play about and disrupt lessons
- They may be uncooperative, difficult to motivate and critical of teachers and other students in the class
- Sometimes such a child has frequent absences from school

### **Using Data to identify Able students**

Brimsham Green produces information on all students, this will include KS2 and 3 SATs results, CAT's test completed in year 7 as well as individual subject information. As a guide the CATs' results over 115 and KS3 point score 45 or above would identify well above average students. This is only a guide and must be used alongside other information, such as teacher assessment and nomination, pupil observation and the examination of a pupil's work.

### **Extension**

Brimsham Green School provides extension activities through all of the subject areas, using high order thinking skills, independent and self directed learning.

### **The G&T Lead Teacher co-ordinators responsibilities**

- Produce a whole school policy on gifted and talented
- Produce information for SLT and year teams to help them identify and deliver a curriculum for gifted and talented students
- Collate info for G&T pupils for SIMs
- Set up a mentoring system
- Develop links with other institutions
- Provide enrichment activities
- Collate faculty and year group policy documents
- Monitor SoW and Lesson plans by collecting examples from each area and observing sample lessons
- Be the link between the school and parents
- Liaise with identified Governor to provide information on progress

### **Faculty/department provision**

Every area of the school, be it pastoral or *academic*, should have a policy on able students, which will state their provision and identification methods. They will identify the able

students in their area and provide a faculty representative to attend regular calendared meetings.

### **Classroom provision**

Every teacher will have identified able students within their teaching groups and have an identifiable provision through extension and/or enrichment.

### **Staff development**

- In-service training for the G&T lead teacher. This will enable good practice to be shared through the able student representatives.
- Opportunities for external training for staff will need to be negotiated through the Staff Development co-ordinator

### **Liaison with primary school**

For good liaison with partner schools it is important that the criteria each school uses for identifying able students is identified.

- The member of staff responsible for Primary Liaison, when visiting the feeder schools, will gather information on able students, also their identification process
- Identified names will be passed to the G&T lead teacher, Heads of Year/College and department for information
- Each student will be contacted and welcomed to the school by the Able Pupils co-ordinator
- G&T summer school for Year 5 pupils

### **Liaison with parents**

The gifted and talented provision will be a three way partnership between parents, the student and the school at all times

- The lead teacher will liaise with parents over individual students, they will be notified of their child's identification and in which particular area/s they excel
- The lead teacher will be the parent's first point of contact when there are queries or concerns regard able students
- Parents will be advised of appropriate enrichment courses that may be suitable for their child

### **Monitoring systems**

The G&T co-ordinator will monitor the student provision:

- By asking for a copy of policies from faculties and pastoral areas
- Observing a sample of lessons where students are taught
- Monitoring data made available on student they will also be monitored for progression through the mentoring system, exam and test data

