

## PORTHCAWL COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL'S POLICY: MORE ABLE AND TALENTED

### **Preamble**

“Education’s purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.”

Malcolm S. Forbes (1919 –1990)

“The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be lighted.”

Plutarch (46 –120)

This policy should be read in conjunction with “Meeting the challenge- Quality Standards in Education for More Able and Talented Pupils” May 2008 Guidance Circular on meeting the educational needs of more able and talented pupils. The policy also works in conjunction with the school’s Curriculum Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy and the Merits and Rewards policy.

At Porthcawl Comprehensive School we believe that all children are entitled to an education that will enable them to develop their full potential, be that intellectual, physical, creative, emotional, spiritual or social, finding appropriate challenge in the positive learning environment we have created.

At Porthcawl Comprehensive School we believe in creating an inclusive learning community that celebrates the uniqueness of all young people. The school will promote stimulating and challenging experiences through a broad balanced curriculum that offers quality learning activities that focus on the particular needs and talents of the young people. We are also committed to identifying and meeting the needs of these young people as early as possible in order to enable them to achieve their best. It is our aim to make education an enjoyable, exciting and worthwhile experience for all our pupils.

### **Policy**

All students have an entitlement to the following:

- Staff commitment and training to develop students’ full potential at all times.
- Lessons that stimulate, engage, challenge, inform, excite and encourage through partnership and dialogue with teachers and other students and active participation in the lesson.
- Courses that lead to examinations and accreditation.
- Skilled, well prepared and informed teachers who have a perspective and understanding of whole school needs, problems and policies, including those concerning issues related to those students who are identified as more able.
- An entitlement beyond subject teaching, including preparation for adult life and preparation for the world of work. This should include extracurricular activity, personal and social education, careers guidance and counselling, visits to local industry, work experience and community service.

It is the school’s aim to use differentiation to meet all students’ individual learning needs for the following reasons:

- Having students working at the appropriate level of challenge increases their levels of motivation and reduces the boredom and frustration that can lead to behavioural problems.
- Students can experience different roles within the classroom via a variety of tasks/challenges/groupings etc. and thus develop their social skills.
- Targets can be agreed that meet the needs of the individual learner and ensure they are realistic and achievable, whilst still providing challenge.
- Underachievement can be targeted through differentiated work and any barriers to success can be reduced.

### **Aims**

- To develop a structure for staff to identify the more able and talented pupils

- To support staff in understanding of and provision for the needs of identified pupils
- To develop provision for more able and talented learners
- To develop a curriculum that extends and enriches the learning experiences of this particular group of learners
- To develop a range of learning and teaching strategies that extend and support young people's development
- To work effectively in partnership with young people and parents / carers to develop individual learning programmes

### Definition

More Able and Talented is the general term for this concept. Young people may be more able and / or talented in diverse fields.

- More able young people demonstrate a higher ability than average for the class and often require differentiated tasks and opportunities to learn through challenges
- Most able young people will be working at a significantly higher level than other learners in the class and will sometimes require additional and different provision.
- Talented young people demonstrate an innate talent or skill in one or more areas, such as:
 

❖ core subjects	❖ creativity
❖ specific curriculum subjects	❖ thinking skills
❖ organisational ability	❖ social skills
❖ leadership	❖ sport

The school recognises that more able and talented young people can fall into three broad categories:

- i. High achievers  
Young people who display a level of ability beyond that of their peers. They are highly motivated and thrive on different and challenging learning experiences.
- ii. Underachievers  
Tend to be withdrawn, shy members of the class who choose not to draw attention to themselves
- iii. Disaffected  
Often engage in anti-social behaviour as a result of poor motivation or lack of sufficient challenge. If educational needs are not met they may rebel against authority

### Process

#### Identification Strategies

We are committed to identifying young people in response to this policy's definition on more able and talented, which will enable us to accurately identify the diverse range of abilities. This will be achieved by using a variety of strategies as part of the identification process. It is not intended to define a learner as more able and talented based on the results of a single strategy but rather from a combination of any of the following:

- External examination results, school exams, a range of other national tests (see school assessment policy)
- Teacher observation and nomination based on class work or coursework
- Pupil checklist of characteristics held by Departments
- Parent / carer nomination based on skill, interests and abilities, possibly using questionnaires

### Procedures

To be able to cater for the individual needs of pupils it is vital that their abilities and aptitudes are recognised early on and any remedial action taken swiftly. This involves responsibilities for a number of key people within the school:

### Roles and Responsibilities

Senior staff should:

- create a climate of achievement for all in whatever they do
- ensure all staff challenge all pupils at whatever level
- create a culture of success – a climate of achievement – so that high achievers won't feel out of place
- constantly acknowledge all types of achievement via the school reward system and presentation evenings
- establish good links with feeder schools to ensure an effective transfer of information
- support staff in establishing an environment within the classroom that is conducive to learning – via the Duty Officer rota or Cause for Concern process
- support innovative approaches to teaching
- monitor the schemes of work of their allocated departments
- analyse the results of this group formally

Heads of department should:

- identify the subject specific characteristics of more able and talented learners
- in consultation with department colleagues identify pupils who are more able or talented and supply the Learning Group with this list at specified times during the year
- provide schemes of work that contain enrichment/extension material for more able pupils whilst offering support material for the less able
- ensure that staff within their departments are using the enrichment or support material
- ensure that staff have up to date information on pupil achievement or specific needs
- ensure someone from the department/faculty liaises with the ALNCo to keep pupil details and information up to date concerning the less and most able pupils
- in consultation with department colleagues identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties and together with the ALN Department take the appropriate action
- analyse the results of this group formally

Classroom teachers should:

- be aware of the preferred learning styles and Additional Learning Needs of the pupils in their class
- ensure that all needs and preferences are catered for within a unit of work
- utilise enrichment and support materials within their lessons to cater for specific needs
- use a variety of teaching and learning approaches and activities within their lessons
- be aware of their role in the identification of more able students, based on subject specific criteria, and general characteristic as outlined, and the need to make the curriculum sufficiently challenging

Form teachers should:

- mentor the more able/ talented pupils within their form group
- be aware of the possible pressures upon these pupils, monitor any changes and report concerns to the Head of Year

The Learning Group should:

- agree and issue criteria for the identification of more able and talented pupils in all curriculum areas
- create a register of such pupils (the top 5-10% of each cohort) and make this available to all staff
- ensure that such a register is an integral part of the ALN register in school
- provide form teachers with the names of more able and talented pupils within their form classes
- review the more able and talented register on an annual basis
- monitor the provision for more able pupils
- evaluate the progress made by students and provision generally on an annual basis
- inform pupils and their parents of their inclusion on this register
- provide continued professional development for all staff that addresses the implications of dealing with more able and talented pupils
- audit provision of, and involvement in, extra-curricular and enrichment activities for the nominated group

The Governing Body should:

- be responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented
- help shape the vision and direction of the school as all inclusive
- ensure that the school has considered the needs of its children of all abilities
- support budgetary provision for resources

“In all its work, the Governing Body should focus on the key issues of raising standards of achievement, establishing high expectations and promoting effective teaching and learning.”

Learners

- Will be asked to set their own rigorous learning targets and will be provided with differentiated work to meet these targets
- Display commitment to the opportunities provided that will develop their full potential.

Parents/Carers

- Will be aware of our commitment to meeting the needs of all our learners
- Support the school in its implementation of this policy

Partnership and Communication

- All more able and talented young people will be entered on the school's more able and talented database
- Where necessary and appropriate the school will link up with its cluster group, external providers and industrial links
- The school brochure will contain a section on provision for more able and talented learners
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Organisation

- The school's policy for more able and talented learners will work within the framework of the curriculum policy
- Teachers and young people will share expectations for lessons
- Staff will make flexible and efficient use of resources within and across departments
- Teachers will deploy appropriate teaching styles with learners and evaluate their outcomes
- Teachers will use their assessments to inform future planning

Learning and Teaching

Teaching and learning strategies might include where appropriate:

- Varying groups to suit tasks
- Setting
- Extension opportunities
- Learner initiated learning opportunities
- Differentiated teacher questioning
- Targeted use of classroom assistants
- Adopting a problem-solving approach
- Adopting a skills based approach
- Awareness of learning styles
- Special tasks of responsibility
- Visits by experts
- Use of more able and talented young people as learning buddies and mentors
- Acknowledging learners' success through displays, rewards, newsletters
- Encouraging identified young people to share their expertise and skills, supporting others within and outside the classroom
- Extracurricular activities
- Listening to Learners' strategies and activities

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

- All monitoring and evaluation should reflect the school's self-evaluation procedures
- The more able and talented database should be regularly monitored and reviewed by the coordinator
- Learners should be aware of testing data and the review process so that they can be instrumental in setting their own learning targets
- The governing body will comment in their Annual Review on progress and developments in implementing this policy