



Policy for More Able Learners

Ely St Mary's CofE Junior School

Written/reviewed by:

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Date:

Review 1: 28th September
2020

Reviewed 2: 7th June 2022

Next review due by:

September 2024

School Vision, Curriculum Values & Policy Aims

Our vision is to provide opportunities for all children, of all faiths and none, to be the best that they can be, in an environment where everyone is valued, respected and challenged. Our school is a place where individuals are supported in their personal journey of learning, growth and development within an ethos of nurture, encouragement and love.

Hebrews 10:24: Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds.

At St Mary's we champion every child to be the **best that they can be**. Our knowledge-led curriculum therefore endeavours to develop our children's **character**, **core skills**, **creativity** and sense of **community**.

Supported by our school's vision, ethos and position as a junior school, we believe that our specialist knowledge of the Key Stage 2 age range ensures **improving outcomes, opportunities and experiences for all our children**. To achieve this, we are aspirational for our pupils, instilling high expectations, the passion, perseverance and stamina to succeed.

Our curriculum aims to be aspirational and provide transferable skills and knowledge for all pupils, now and in their future. We recognise that this is achieved by offering an engaging and relevant but flexible approach to learning, to meet the needs of all learners, including those more able and exceptionally able. We believe that enabling all pupils to develop a depth of knowledge and the ability to draw upon, manipulate and apply this knowledge, is the key to achievement for all pupils.

Policy Aims:

- To make early identification of our More Able children;
- To provide a challenging and aspirational curriculum for all;
- Ensure that all pupils, including the more able, achieve their full potential;
- To identify strategies to support underachieving pupils.

Who are 'more able' learners?

There is no single, universally agreed definition of a 'more able' learner. At Ely St Mary's, we recognise children to be 'more able' or 'exceptionally able' at a point in time if they fall into the multi-level definition below and fulfil the criteria outlined in the identification section of this policy.

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"Championing every child to be the best that they can be"

Responsibility Excellence Spirituality Perseverance Energy Caring Tolerance

- More able pupils are those pupils who have achieved at a greater depth level in their previous key stage (Key Stage 1 outcomes). These will often be referred to in school as 'KS1 higher attainers'.

and/or

- More able pupils are those pupils who are currently achieving at a greater depth level within a subject, demonstrating abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with potential to do so)

and/or

- Exceptionally able pupils demonstrate a high level of developmental potential within one or more subject areas. These pupils may not fall into one of the first two parts of this definition but will demonstrate a number of broader characteristics beyond academic outcomes. These characteristics comprise of cognitive ability; a personal profile of interests and strengths, including beyond the classroom; independent learning behaviours; learning and thinking interactions.

Roles & Responsibilities

Designated lead teacher for more able: Mrs Mason in liaison with Headteacher and assessment lead: Miss Clarke

Governor with a focus on more able learners: Mr Jeffries

The lead staff are responsible for constructing and implementing this policy school wide, with the support of other senior leaders and subject leaders also.

Classroom based staff ensure all pupils receive a broad and rich curriculum – we see this as the precursor to high achievement for all and in enabling staff to identify talents and aptitudes early on. Classroom based staff are also responsible for implementing a range of personalised strategies to ensure exceptionally able pupils are stretched and challenged. Where pupils are identified as requiring support or are underachieving, teachers work in liaison with the Head teacher and SENDCo to deploy strategies (see below) to secure improvement.

Parents are essential in working in partnership with school to provide the best educational provision and experience for all children, including those exceptionally able or who show potential. Specific ways in which parents contribute to this process include: liaison with class teachers (parent consultations; drop ins); identification of strategies to support children in school and identify wider interests (pupil passports); contribution to APDRs where required (verbally, in person, via new software 'Provision Map'); signposting extracurricular opportunities and clubs, including music bursary; inviting parents into school to offer inspirational talks about career aspirations.

Identification (see also Nace subject specific criteria for in depth details appendix 1)

STEM (Science, technology, engineering/design and mathematics)

Exceptionally able learners within STEM may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Rapid and sound memorisation of mathematical material, learning and understanding mathematical ideas quickly;
- Make connections between the concepts they have learned;
- Reason logically: can verify, justify and prove, working systematically and accurately: able to communicate their reasoning and justify their methods. They are adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry;
- Demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm for mathematical problems, taking a creative approach and are more analytical: being able to think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches. They sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions and enjoy working at increased depth;
- Design and construct products with a high level of precision and quality;
- Be open to making changes throughout processes to make the best possible product;

- Have a precise awareness of what tools and materials are required in order to achieve the desired outcomes;
- Use a variety of programming languages, including the use of sequence, selection, repetition and variables;
- Use interactive approaches, running and debugging programs and showing tenacity in solving problems;
- Quick, confident, efficient take up of new computing applications;
- Exploring and developing skills and experience independently;
- Intrigued rather than frustrated by problems;
- Enjoy researching scientific facts and applying theories;
- Have scientific hobbies and/or members of scientific clubs and societies
- Able to sustain their interest and concentration and go beyond an obvious answer with greater depth

Humanities

Exceptionally able learners within Humanities, including English, may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Displaying strong recall of subject-specific vocabulary and grammar;
- Independently making connections between different concepts and ideas across humanities subjects, for example historical significance, geographical ideas, etymology;
- Independently manipulating language to communicate ideas beyond what is being taught;
- Spontaneously expressing a point of view through evaluation of and reference to reliability of different source material to construct an opinion/narrative;
- Selectively manipulating and organising evidence in order to draw conclusions and form beliefs, linking to concepts;
- Having wide-ranging general knowledge about subject, world and topical issues, and awareness of their own place in national/international contexts;
- Being creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solutions;
- Having a more developed awareness of how spiritual and cultural issues affect societies in the past/present and globally.
- Often reads often and widely and has, in turn, developed a broad and sophisticated vocabulary.

Writing at Greater Depth (DFE) The pupil can:

- *write effectively for a range of purposes and audiences, selecting the appropriate form and drawing independently on what they have read as models for their own writing (e.g. literary language, characterisation, structure)*
- *distinguish between the language of speech and writing³ and choose the appropriate register*
- *exercise an assured and conscious control over levels of formality, particularly through manipulating grammar and vocabulary to achieve this.*
- *use the range of punctuation taught at key stage 2 correctly (e.g. semi-colons, dashes, colons, hyphens) and, when necessary, use such punctuation precisely to enhance meaning and avoid ambiguity.*

The Arts inc Physical Education

Exceptionally able learners within the arts may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Be confident in themselves and in familiar contexts – take risks with ideas and approaches, and be able to think ‘outside the box’ by showing a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance;
- Be intelligent, independent, thoughtful performers, actively forming and adapting strategies, tactics or compositions;

- Be able to reflect on processes and outcomes in order to improve performance, understanding the close and changing relationship between skill, fitness and the tactics or composition of their performance;
- Be good decision-makers and able to take the initiative, often showing high levels of autonomy, independence and leadership;
- May have a high degree of control and coordination of their bodies;
- Have a conceptual understanding, shown through the sophisticated selection and application of advanced skills, tactics and compositional ideas for their age;
- The ability to perform to an audience;
- The dexterity to play a musical instrument;
- Have a good understanding of theoretical knowledge;
- Be able to creatively compose when given a stimulus;
- Accuracy of pitch and quality of tone with voice or an instrument
- The ability to keep a beat and hold the rhythm; able to multi-task
- Enjoy experimenting with materials; able to go beyond the conventional and use materials and processes in creative and practical ways
- Want to follow a different plan to others, challenge tasks given or extend their brief in seemingly unrelated directions
- Confidence in using a wide range of tools and techniques skilfully

Strategies and Enrichment

Through research and pupil voice, staff and children at Ely St Mary's have agreed that the following (not exhaustive) list of strategies and enrichment activities will be used to stretch and challenge pupils of all abilities, including those who are exceptionally able in one or more subject areas.

STEM

- Science Week inc visitors with careers in science
- CREST Awards (Super Star; Discovery)
- Coding Club, Construction Club, Animation Club, Forest School
- World Maths Day/ National Number Day
- Themed 'Come and Enjoy' Cafes – Science, DT skills, Maths Challenges
- Trips and Visits e.g. Space Dome
- Extension materials to promote depth and speed e.g. Tackling Tables Intelligent Practice; Collins Enriching Maths, Greater Depth challenges.
- Impossible problems e.g. brain teasers, puzzles, or problems with multiple answers.
- Independent research
- Independent investigations
- UKMT Junior Maths Challenge

Humanities inc English

- Classroom libraries to broaden reading repertoire and dialogue around book recommendations
- Caveats – extra rules for a task to increase challenge
- Writing from a different viewpoint
- Writing in a different genre
- Summarise - summing up ideas or information, giving a written response in a limited number of words.
- Free writing (without teacher input at the beginning)
- Reflection – relating to something globally / locally
- Open-ended tasks to allow creative thinking
- Asking higher order questions (and using these to extend tasks)
- Can you explain further? Tell me more about ...Why is this important? What links can you make between this and ...
- Museum visits

- Recommended Reads; Book Bingo

The Arts inc PE

- Access to in-school art studio and high quality resources including Screen Printing resources
- Outdoor gym installation
- Assess This – evaluating their own and others work
- Beat The Teacher – perform a skill better than the teacher
- Topic Monologue – imitate rhythmically / tone from a teaching example, then innovate from the example
- Start / End given – children make up the middle using improvisation.
- Develop personalised approach to the use of diaries, sketchbooks, portfolios.
- Visitors/ trips to include bands, artists/ gallery, dance workshops
- Competition participation
- Sports Leadership opportunities
- Gallery visits and competitions
- Specialist teachers for outdoor games, dance, drama and gymnastics.
- Choir
- Peripatetic lessons and music bursary for disadvantaged pupils.
- Use of Charanga in school lessons to enable continuity with peripatetic lessons
- Pupil Premium funded extracurricular clubs
- Extra curricular choices: musical theatre; choir; art club; orchestra
- School productions

Curriculum, teaching and learning

Please also see the school's Teaching & Learning Policy.

As illustrated within our school vision, ethos and intent, Ely St Mary's strives to ensure all pupils are challenged in their learning of new knowledge and skills across subjects, encouraging depth and breadth over accelerated linear progression through year group content. We emphasise the importance of retention and retrieval of subject knowledge and skills to enable pupils to stretch their thinking further and over longer periods of time. This is facilitated through the use of retrieval practice. In addition, we promote an inclusive ethos, implementing practical strategies to meet the needs of all pupils, such as fluid groupings; timetabling; group, peer and independent activities; flexible use of Tas (1:1 and whole class 'roaming'). As a school we choose to teach primarily through mixed ability classes and we feel there is great value in this approach in that it offers greater opportunities to hear diverse perspectives and learn from each other; promotes growth and aspirational mindsets; develops vocabulary; advanced students can also experience the satisfaction of helping less-able learners and challenge the depth of their own understanding by modelling more complex ideas to others. Within lessons, staff make use of scaffolding rather than differentiated levels of work, offering stretch and progression through opportunities for depth (e.g. problem solving and reasoning). This enables pupils to vary their level of challenge according to their confidence levels with the subject matter on that day or within that topic, without capping their aspiration and potential.

Tracking and assessment

At Ely St Mary's the following actions enable staff to track and assess all pupils to ensure every child is fulfilling their potential, with some actions being specific to 'more able':

- assessment for learning – day-to-day use of feedback, questioning and observations to inform next steps in quality first teaching (see feedback policy)
- use of termly summative tests within reading and writing and maths
- termly pupil progress meetings to identify groups and individuals who are progressing in line, above or below the expected standard in order to target teaching and support accordingly.
- termly, whole school data analysis of year groups and sub groups such as pupil premium, gender and more able.
- performance management observations and appraisal targets with a challenge focus
- end of year data analysis with county and national comparisons

- use of Pupil Asset groups to track 'higher attainers' throughout their KS2 journey. Also, the development of an exceptionally able register for the wider curriculum.
- opportunities annually to take part in national challenges e.g. the UKMT junior maths challenge.
- pupil voice and surveys are used to track opinions and to guide further school development and teaching.

Academic Support

Where children are identified as being 'at risk' of not fulfilling their potential, academic or pastoral intervention is arranged to meet need. This can range from pre and post teaching; precision teaching or tuition, for example. Where it is identified that children have a barrier to their academic performance, such as literacy difficulties, Ely St Mary's offers a comprehensive suite of assistive technology hardware and software (e.g. Clicker) which enables children to share their knowledge across the curriculum and be recognised for this.

Personal, social and emotional support

It is important to recognise that not all more able pupils are obvious achievers. For many, their potential can be masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem or special educational needs and/or social, emotional and mental health needs. In school we offer regular formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to communicate with teachers to develop a home/school partnership and reduce the impact of such factors. We also have dedicated pastoral staff who work with both the pupils and their families to help remove barriers to learning. Around school we promote and praise effort over attainment as we recognise achievement and progress is not always linear, and even those pupils who are higher attaining may be coasting and not working to their full potential.

Continuing professional development

Ensuring our children are challenged to achieve their best is supported in school by the professional development of all staff relating to high-quality teaching and learning for more able learners. This includes:

- Access to NACE and associated resources and support
- Achievement for All
- Growth Mindset CPD
- Weekly staff meetings, linked to School Development priorities
- Lesson Study providing the opportunity for staff to observe each other and share best practice
- Subject specific courses as appropriate including Maximising the use of TAs (for all); NPQML projects which include a focus on greater depth and more able.
- Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust Support – CPD programme, internal visits from subject specific leads.
- Cluster Moderation – greater depth
- Rosenshine's Principles in Action, retrieval and question matrices
- Attachment and mental health training
- Pie Corbett Teaching for Greater Depth Writing at KS2