

MORASHA JEWISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

GIFTED AND TALENTED CHILDREN

Introduction

Morasha Jewish Primary School has a responsibility to ensure sustainable and effective provision for the needs of Gifted and Talented pupils. The aims of this policy are aspirational and evolutionary.

Gifted and Talented provision should meet the specific learning needs of these pupils. Such provision should improve the provision for all pupils by giving appropriate challenge. Provision for the Gifted and Talented should be rooted in the notion of 'developing expertise', and is not just about passing more exams. Gifted and Talented Education includes able, gifted and talented pupils.

Definitions

The following definitions will be used, in accordance with HIAS recommendations:

- **Able:** pupils who have the potential or capacity to develop expertise in one or more areas of learning or performance;
- **Gifted:** pupils who are able in academic areas of learning and who are attaining highly;
- **Talented:** pupils who are able in Sport or the Arts and who are attaining highly.

The 1993 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice did not include gifted and talented in the definition of those having Special Educational Needs. Children who fall into the category of very able learners, that is those in the top 2% of the school population, require a specific orientation to ensure their needs are addressed.

The following criteria illustrates the possible dichotomy between bright/able children and truly gifted and talented individuals:

Bright child	Gifted and talented child
Interested in excess of the norm	Highly curious; wonders a lot and articulates a creative response
Often has good ideas	Inevitably has strong insights and often conspicuous signs of lateral thinking
Answers questions appropriately with strong degree of accuracy	Elaborates on sharp insightful observations; makes excellent connections with other information domain - good at bridging
Repetition is required for strong skill	One or two repetitions are required for mastery of deep understanding
Has strong propensity to understand	Constructs abstractions readily
Grasps meanings beyond that which expected	Draws inferences, readily concludes would be
Recreates with great accuracy	Creates original work
Solid technician or operator	Readily creates and invents
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Has a good ability to memorise	Very good at memorising and making informed guesses
Makes sound observations when shown how	Highly self critical and has a tendency to set exceedingly high standards
Enjoys and motivated by straightforward sequential challenges	Thrives on complex challenges

The School's aims and objectives encourage all pupils to reach their true potential and eventually become independent learners who value learning with and from others while embracing initiative.

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For identification purposes gifted and talented children can be grouped as follows:

- Broadly gifted - excel in all they do and enjoy that success; easy to identify.
- Talented - possess a particular, if not striking, ability in one area, e.g. Maths or Music; relatively easy to identify as they tend to be academically able and successful.
- Rebellious gifted - possess some behavioural difficulties which manifest themselves as potentially disruptive and under-achieve; often such children are identified as purely disruptive or as a lower ability.
- Creatively gifted - deep thinkers who may be unpopular with peers due to a perceived lack of social skills; may be incorrectly identified as disruptive.
- Concealed gifted - under-achieving children who do not want to be different from their peers so they may merge into their peer group; often such children are incorrectly identified as underachievers or simply less able.

Aims

The school aims to:

- Ensure that school policies include a focus on the needs of gifted and talented children.
- Develop effective school-wide strategies to identify, educate and support the gifted and talented.
- Identify able, gifted and talented pupils within the school population.
- Develop a sustainable and effective curriculum, and extra curricular provision for all able, gifted and talented pupils.
- Try to ensure that provision has optimum impact on the progress of able, gifted and talented pupils.
- Explore and develop means of collaboration to help able, gifted and talented pupils and provide for their needs.

The Need for Early Identification

Multiple criteria and sources of evidence should be used to identify able, gifted and talented pupils within the school. An accurate record of able, gifted and talented pupils should be maintained and updated at regular intervals. The record should be supported by a comprehensive monitoring, progress planning and reporting system. The processes of identification should be regularly reviewed in light of pupil performance and value-added data.

Referral, assessment and identification can come from diverse sources, e.g.

- Teachers request following observation
- Parental request
- Management request
- Following blanket testing of Foundation Stage
- Key Stage 1 pupils and National Curriculum Tests
- NFER Tests or school exams.

Like many other children gifted and talented children can often fail to achieve their potential and may be unable to cope with their abilities and can suffer from many difficulties. Early identification, assessment and provision is important for gifted/talented children for the following reasons:

It can minimise difficulties that can be encountered when interventions and provision occur. These difficulties are typically:

- low confidence and self esteem;
- high degree of frustration and self-blame;
- poor study skills;
- social isolation and a belief that they are misunderstood and different to their

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- peers;
- problems with concentration;
- living in own 'private' world.

It can maximise the likely positive response of the child, for e.g. gifted and talented children who are underachieving may be given a much needed boost by realising their potential by achieving a high IQ rating. It can allow for a temporary learning difficulty to be overcome and for future learning to be unaffected.

The process starts by referral to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Able children, like all children having special education needs, have their own unique cluster of characteristics. The psychological imprints that learning abilities may have caused will effect individuals in different ways. Often dyspraxic able children feel greater levels of social threat for example than dyslexic children. ADHD able children typically will be less emotionally resilient than others. It is difficult to make generalised statements about features of the failing able child but there is a recognition of certain characteristics which are considered in regard to the management of special needs.

- **Coping Strategies.** Able children with special needs do not necessarily have heightened emotional resources. Often the opposite is the case. These children may have suffered from inaccurate assumptions based on coping expectations which fall short of requirement. Sometimes such children are skilled at masking *difficulties*.
- **Parental Expectation.** High scores on such tests as the WISC may suggest that the child has strong potential across all or most intellectual activities and/or spatial reasoning. No-one would assume for example a gifted musician need be similarly gifted in say English, chess or Drama.

Often able children are slated to achieve to a high level in all areas despite evidence that seldom is ability expressed uniformly across the board. Realistic expectations need to reflect the best interests of the child. Parents may need to be reassured that such areas as setting (English and Maths), the nature of support, general educational management and expectations are considered responses given the nature and effect of learning abilities.

- **Developed Verbal Reasoning.** Good language resources can increase the ability to grasp complex concepts. Such skills can also arm a child to further develop avoidance and manipulative strategies. To avoid exposure and any resulting ill effect, able children may use language forcefully to protect self-esteem and market self-worth as opposed to a strongly developed adjunct to learning. In some cases a lack of tolerance is proportional to the command of verbal reasoning.
- **Social Difficulties.** Able children, like all children generally, require recognition for their successes. If they experience an overdose of failure heightened by untoward discrepancy in performance given expectation, social problems may be a further by-product of such experiences. The quest to prove worth by marketing intelligence can intrude on social reasoning.
- **Agenda Search.** Able children who rely on determining factors that give reasoning an edge, may assume answers are too accessible to justify the challenge. They may search for hidden possibilities and thus steer an inaccurate course. The resulting wrong answer may cause acute embarrassment.

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- **More Stretching/Challenge.** Sometimes able children with special abilities and learning styles have a higher threshold of boredom. Even though processing skills may be developed, filing and accessing may be poor. Despite the need to stretch and challenge to keep them on track, stimulated and motivated, due consideration is required regarding aspects of inefficient functioning.
- **Concept Command.** Given the possibly superior bridging abilities, concepts may be grasped readily. This need not imply that they can be expressed adequately. To gain recognition able special needs children may have developed an appetite to forcefully express knowledge publicly and thus advertise their success. When denied success in certain areas of functioning there may be a need to set the record straight in terms of rectifying any untoward publicity when contrasted with others.
- **Frustration.** Able children may be better able to identify their own possible dysfunction. This may lead them to feel very sad or worried about their lives. It can lead to depression and acute frustration.

The school policy on such children is:

1. To help them to understand the reasons behind how their minds works, any under achievement and that this is a temporary inconvenience and not a life long handicap. They require help in managing the dichotomy in learning variation.
2. To rectify untoward responses to learning style as quickly as possible.
3. To help them develop key life skills. Able special needs children may require a considered intervention. They may have a better developed contribution to make toward their own assessment. Also, they may have a stronger potential to develop self advocacy skills.
4. To assist them in utilising strengths. Able special needs children may require specific help in learning how to learn. Given the real strengths, these could be employed to help overcome any weaknesses.
5. To reassure and encourage. Such children may need to become more accepting towards themselves, especially if they have become reliant on seeking the advantage from expressing ability. Like all children, they need to know that the teacher cares and is with them and for them and skilled in techniques to put things right which may need due attention.

Provision

A range of methods/strategies should be employed to meet the needs of the able, gifted and talented pupils. Teaching and Learning should be suitably challenging and varied to promote breadth, depth and pace, and to promote high achievement. Innovation and new technologies should be used to raise achievement and stimulate motivation. Innovative models of learning beyond the classroom should be developed in collaboration with local, national and international schools and colleges to enhance teaching and learning. Coherent strategies should be developed to direct and develop individual expert performance via external agencies.

The school endeavours to ensure those designated as 'gifted and talented' are appropriately challenged and provided for. Gifted and talented children may be academically several years ahead of their peers but are still likely to be emotionally and socially at their chronological age. In Years 4, 5 and 6 children are set for English and Maths which allows for differentiation.

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In meeting the needs of gifted and talented, the following is considered:

- Planning schemes of work and the broader curriculum with specific consideration being given to the gifted and talented children.
- Planning and implementing related issues, e.g. resources, differentiation, teaching and learning styles.
- Developing enrichment and extension materials to stretch most able.
- The structure and dynamic of different teaching groups.

Role of Governors

- To ensure there is a focus on Gifted and Talented children in school.
- To appoint a Governor to take a special interest in gifted and talented (September, 2007).

School Initiative

From September 2005, ensure that staff development and deployment shows an awareness of gifted and talented. This will include INSET arrangements.

To review the curricular annually in order that it retains continuity, progression, breadth and balance.

To ensure that gifted and talented children are discussed at Staff Meetings. The Role of Curriculum Coordinator/Director of Studies.

To ensure that gifted and talented pupils are considered in school policies concerned with teaching and learning and in schemes of work.

To ensure that gifted and talented pupils are discussed at Key Stage Meetings.

Standards

Levels of attainment and achievement of able, gifted and talented pupils should be high, in relation to the rest of the school.

Enabling Curriculum Entitlement and Choice

Curricular organization should be flexible to allow pupils to have enrichment, subject choice, and to work beyond their age and/or phase, and across subjects. The curriculum should offer personalised learning pathways to help maximise individual potential.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment data should be used by all teachers across the school to ensure challenge and sustained progress in individual pupils' learning. Formative assessment and individual target setting should become part of established practice. Self and peer assessment should be part of classroom practice.

Transfer and Transition

There should be clear processes to ensure productive transfer of information i.e. from school to school, class to class, year to year and school to college. Transfer data should be used to inform planning of teaching and learning at subject and at individual level to ensure progression according to ability rather than age.

Leadership

The Headmaster, Senior Management Team, The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator and a Governor should be responsible for leading gifted and talented provision within the school.

Policy

The gifted and talented policy should be integral to the school's inclusion agenda and linked to the school improvement plan. The policy should direct and reflect best practice in the school.

School Ethos and Pastoral Care

Success should be celebrated across a wide range of abilities. Equal emphasis should be placed on high achievement and emotional well-being.

Staff Development

Staff needs should be regularly audited and an appropriate range of professional development in able, gifted and talented education organized. Professional Development should be informed by research and collaboration within and beyond the school. Priorities for the development of able, gifted and talented provision should be monitored through Performance Management processes.

Resources

Appropriate resources and funding will be allocated by the School to develop good practice throughout the school. The impact of resources should be reviewed in terms of value.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Performance against targets should be rigorously evaluated against clear criteria to inform whole school self-evaluation processes. Self-evaluation should challenge existing provision and inform the development of further innovative practice in collaboration with other schools.

Engaging the Community, Families and Others

Parents could be informed of developments and encouraged to be actively engaged in extending their children's education. Support from outside agencies should be integrated. There should be a strong emphasis of collaborative and innovative work with other schools/colleges.

Signed.....Ian Kamiel.....

Date.....April 2008.....

To be reviewed bySeptember 2009.....