BARKER'S LANE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
POLICY FOR MORE ABLE & TALENTED PUPILS

Introduction

In our school we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of **all** our children and inclusive in its nature. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way as to provide a differentiated and challenging curriculum which enables each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'more able and talented'.

We are very aware that the drawback of a narrow definition is that it can be 'exclusive' and that 'more able and talented behaviours may occur in certain people at certain times under certain conditions'.

At Barker's Lane Community School the term 'more able' refers to a child who has ability in one or more areas of academic achievement at a very high level. Those children who are more able often have very well-developed learning skills. The term 'talented' refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields / practical skills, such as sport or music, but who may not perform at a high level across all areas of learning.

We respect the right of all children in our school, irrespective of differences in ability, to access a number of areas of learning, and to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development into active and responsible adults.

The aims of our school make specific reference to teaching and learning that takes into account the needs of all children. They also identify the commitment to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We continue to offer a range of strategies, differentiation and intervention which is available to all. The classroom environment, teaching strategies and resources are tailored for individual needs. Our Universal Provision focuses on person centred practice and caters for different learning styles. There are individual expectations and individual outcomes.

This policy guides the way in which this happens for our more able and talented children.

Aims and Objectives

Through this policy we aim to:
● ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all of our children;
● enable children to develop to their full potential;
● offer children opportunities to generate their own learning;
● ensure that we challenge and extend the children through the opportunities we provide for them.
● encourage children to think and work independently.
● foster a love and commitment to lifelong learning.

Identification of more able and talented children

We use a range of strategies to identify more able and talented children. The work we do with each child, alongside the information we gather with parents and carers at the start of each year enables us to develop one-page profiles for each child.

On-Entry and Baseline assessments take place within the first half term in Nursery and Reception. These give information about each child's developing skills and aptitudes across the areas of learning experience. We discuss each child's assessment information and use this information when planning for individual needs.

These pupils can then be assessed using standardised assessments (e.g. BPVS II and Ravens Intelligence test) to gather more detailed information about their learning potential if this is deemed necessary.

We discuss each child individually at our termly Pupil Progress meetings. We identify them as more able and talented children when they achieve high levels of attainment across the curriculum, or in particular skills or aspects of learning.

Aptitudes:
We recognise that children can have a variety of talents in any of the following:

● Physical skills
● Artistic skills
● Mechanical ingenuity
● Leadership
● High intelligence
● Creativity

We also recognise children's 'trans-intellective' strengths e.g. empathy, resourcefulness and resilience.

Aptitudes in Literacy:
More able and very able children in English are identified when they:
● demonstrate high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
● use research skills effectively to synthesise information;
● enjoy reading and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level;
● use a wide vocabulary and enjoy working with words;
● see issues from a range of perspectives;
● possess a creative and productive mind and use advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

Aptitudes in Numeracy:
More able and very able children in numeracy are identified when they:
● explore a range of strategies for solving a problem;
● are naturally curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
● see solutions quickly without needing to try a range of options;
● look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
● work flexibly and establish their own strategies;
● enjoy manipulating numbers in a variety of ways.

Teaching and learning style
Teachers in our school plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. High emphasis is placed on creating a 'community of enquiry' and developing thinking skills and problem-solving process.

We give all children the opportunity to show what they can do, know and understand, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning by providing:

● An effective learning environment which allows for independent learning and individual research;
● Curriculum that challenges higher level skills and thinking

- Enhanced, effective feedback for learners in order to stretch and challenge
- Common activities that allow the children to respond at their own level;
- Enrichment activities that broadens a child's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area;
- An individual activity within a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- The opportunity for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning;
- Curriculum time for pupils to explore their own interests in a structured way;
- Time for pupil-led group learning with teacher input to ensure challenge as required;
- Opportunities to work in groups / pairs and use digital technology effectively.
- Opportunities to experience a range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning

Personal, Social and Emotional & Wellbeing
Our school culture is based on ensuring all children feel happy, safe and secure. We place great emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills and emotional literacy and resilience. We aim to foster creativity and develop children's growth mindset, confidence and self-esteem.

Equal Opportunities
Equality of opportunities is always observed with positive attitudes to all pupils and learning being developed irrespective of disability, gender, race, ethnic origin, culture, language or religion.

Shared Learning at home
Learning is also enriched through regular shared learning activities linked to the theme being undertaken in classes. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children. At the start of each half term, pupils are involved in developing the shared learning activities, which gives opportunity for them to create and present work at their own level.

Resources
There are a wide range of resources, including digital resources to support learning across the school. These are housed in each of the classrooms and in some central areas.

Transition
Whole school planning allows for smooth transition between phases. Liaison with the next teacher / local high schools allows for smooth transition, progression and continuity between each age group.

Monitoring & Evaluation
Monitoring the progress of more able and talented children through discussions with teachers and termly assessment information is the responsibility of the SLT, through our Pupil Progress Meetings.

This policy was compiled by Mrs Richardson in February 2015 in consultation with all staff and governors. It was last reviewed in June 2024. It will be monitored and reviewed by June 2027.

Appendix 2: General Checklist for Identifying More Able and Talented Pupils
(Taken from: A Curriculum of Opportunity, WAG, 2003)

More able and talented children may:

● possess extensive general knowledge, often know more than the teacher, and find the usual reference books superficial

● show good insight into cause-effect relationships

● easily grasp underlying principles, and need the minimum of explanation

● quickly make generalisations and extract the relevant points from complex material

● have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why – are inventive and original when interested

● ask searching questions which tend to be unlike other children's questions

● often see the unusual rather than the conventional relationships – are able to pose problems and solve ingeniously

● display intellectual playfulness, fantasise and imagine, and are quick to see connections and to manipulate ideas

● give inventive responses to open ended questions

- have a keen sense of humour in the unusual, and are quick to appreciate nuances and hidden meanings

- appreciate verbal puns, cartoons, jokes, and often enjoy bizarre humour, satire and irony

- criticise constructively even if sometimes argumentatively

- be unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination, and want to debate and find reasons to justify the why and wherefore

- have mental speeds faster than physical capabilities so are often reluctant to write at length

- prefer to talk rather than write, and often talk at speed with fluency and expression

- be reluctant to practise skills already mastered, finding such practice futile

- read rapidly and can retain what is read, and can recall detail

- listen only to part of the explanation and appear to lack concentration or even interest, but always know what is going on

- jump stages in learning, and are often frustrated by having to fill in the stages missed

- leap from concrete examples to abstract rules and general principles

- have quick absorption and recall of information, seem to need no revision, and are impatient with repetition
- be keen and alert observers, note detail and are quick to see similarities and differences

- see greater significance in a story or film and continue the story

- see problems quickly and take the initiative

- have advanced understanding and use of language, but are sometimes hesitant as the correct word is searched for and then used

- become absorbed for long periods when interested, and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change

- be persistent in seeking activity completion when motivated and often set very high personal standards – are perfectionists

- be more than usually interested in 'adult' problems such as important issues in current affairs (local and world), evolution, justice, the universe etc.

- be concerned to adapt and improve institutions, objects, systems, and can be particularly critical of school for example

- be philosophical about everyday problems and common sense issues

- be perceptive in discussion about peoples' motives, needs and frailties

- daydream and seem lost in another world

● show sensitivity and react strongly to things causing distress or injustice

● empathise with others, and often take a leadership role, are very understanding and sympathetic

● be confident and competent

● express own feelings

● attribute ideas to others

● be self-effacing

● reflect on own performance

Reference: Wallace B (2000) *Teaching the Very Able Child: developing a Policy and Adopting strategies for provision.* London: David Fulton

Publishers (A NACE/Fulton Publication)

Appendix 3: Subject Specific Checklists
(Taken from: A Curriculum of Opportunity, WAG, 2003)

While general checklists can be used to identify more able pupils across the curriculum, it is useful to identify pupils against subject-specific criteria, especially at secondary level. This enables the school to identify those pupils who may be manifesting ability within one or more subjects, and can indicate pupils who have strengths in particular intelligences rather than across the curriculum. The following checklists are useful for refining teacher observation.

In the following areas, more able pupils:

English
● show close reading skills and attention to detail
● show attention to spelling and meaning of words
● are sensitive to nuance of language use, use language precisely
● cope well in dual language medium
● have a well-developed, sophisticated sense and appreciation of humour
● have fluency and breadth of reading
● contribute incisive, critical responses, can analyse own work
● show pleasure and involvement in experimenting with language
● are able to read with more meaning, drawing on inference and deduction, can 'read between the lines'
● analyse insights confidently and precisely when discussing their own and others' writing intentions
● approach writing tasks thoughtfully and with careful preparation
● draw out relationships between different texts read

● are able to reflect on language and linguistic forms they encounter, having insight into their own abilities
● are able to transfer skills across the curriculum.

Mathematics
● grasp the formal structure of a problem: can generate ideas for action
● are able to generalise from examples
● recognise pattern: can specialise and make conjectures
● are able to generalise approaches to problem-solving
● reason logically: can verify, justify and prove
● use mathematical symbols as part of the thinking process
● think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches
● may work backwards and forwards when solving a problem
● may leap stages in logical reasoning and think in abbreviated mathematical forms
● remember mathematical relationships, problem types, ways of approaching problems and patterns of reasoning.

Science
● recognise patterns and relationships in science data: can form a hypothesis based on valid evidence and draw conclusions
● use subject vocabulary effectively in construction of abstract ideas
● are aware of how the context influences the interpretation of science content
● think flexibly, generalise ideas and adapt problem solving approaches
● recognise and process reliable, valid and accurate data: can explain why data is unreliable, invalid or inaccurate
● are able to evaluate findings and think critically
● enjoy reasoning logically.

Digital technology / competency
● use digital technology independently
● use digital skills and technology to support their studies in other subjects
● use digital skills to solve problems
● use their skills and knowledge of digital technology to design information systems and suggest improvements to existing systems
● consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use
● consider the limitations of digital technology and information sources
● consider some of the social, economic, and ethical issues raised by the use of digital technology.

Geography
● possess wide ranging general knowledge about the world
● are enthusiastic observers of the world around them
● are intrigued by the workings of their own environments
● enjoy identifying patterns and similarities in different contexts
● appreciate the relationships of different scales of environments
● understand and begin to explain more complex inter relationships
● analyse confidently and draw conclusions
● draw meaningful generalisations from detailed information
● appreciate varying viewpoints and attitudes
● formulate opinions and use evidence to support own viewpoint
● creatively design and interpret spatial representations
● enjoy and can confidently use a wide range of visual resources including maps and photographs
● have good information processing skills

● monitor and regulate personal work.

History
● are able to set both new and previously acquired information in a chronological framework
● make confident use of conventions which describe historical periods and the passing of time
● have a broad range of general and historical knowledge
● show a keen awareness of the characteristics of different historical periods and the diversity of experience within each one
● aware of the provisional nature of knowledge
● make imaginative links between the topics studied and with other subjects in the curriculum
● make suggestions which reflect independent thought concerning the connections, causes and consequences of historical events, situations and changes
● debate the significance of events, people and changes
● are prepared to challenge interpretations
● use a range of historical sources, including complex and ambiguous ones, with confidence and perception
● ask searching historical questions, engaging in increasingly independent historical enquiry and problem-solving exercises
● give increasingly sophisticated reasons for the selection of sources
● show a lively curiosity with regard to historical problems and debates
● reach soundly based evaluations and conclusions based on considered use of evidence, and be prepared to support them with reasoned argument
● show determination and perseverance in investigating topics
● select and use historical information to illuminate a narrative, support an argument or challenge an interpretation
● sustain a line of argument, making well balanced judgements
● use subject specific vocabulary and terminology with accuracy and confidence.

Art
● analyse and interpret their observations and present them creatively
● draw on existing knowledge, make connections and draw on comparisons with others' work
● are enthusiastic and interested in the visual world
● enjoy experimenting with materials, able to go beyond the conventional
● can sustain concentration, constantly refining ideas
● have confidence using a wide range of skills and techniques
● quick to learn and transfer skills.

Physical education
● use the body with confidence in differentiated, expressive and imaginative ways
● are able to adapt, anticipate and make decisions
● have a good sense of shape, space, direction and timing
● have a good control of gross and fine body movements and can handle objects skilfully
● produce a seamless fluency of movements with an intuitive feel for elegant movement
● show high level of understanding of principles of health-related exercise and their application in a variety of activities
● are able to use technical terms effectively, accurately and fluently
● are able to perform advanced skills and techniques and transfer skills between activities
● are able to analyse, evaluate their own and others' work using results to effect improvement
● take the initiative, demonstrating leadership and independence of thought.

Welsh Second Language
● show an interest and empathy to other cultures
● are curious about how language 'works', its meaning and function

- recognise grammatical patterns and functions of words
- are able to use technical vocabulary to discuss language
- use linguistic/non-linguistic clues to infer meaning
- identify and memorise new sounds and 'chunks' of language
- are able to listen and to reproduce sounds accurately
- are flexible in thinking, showing flair, intuition and creativity
- extrapolate general rules from examples, can make connections
- apply principles from known language to the learning of new ones
- have effective communication strategies.
- show interest in the Welsh language around them
- are keen to communicate with native speakers.

Music
- hear music 'in the head'
- have a strong musical memory
- demonstrate power of expression and skill beyond competency
- are particularly sensitive to melody, timbre, rhythms and patterns
- respond emotionally to sounds
- demonstrate coherence and individuality in developing musical ideas
- show a commitment to achieving excellence
- have the motivation and dedication to persevere and practise.

Design and technology
- readily accept and discuss new ideas
- link the familiar with the novel and see application in 2D or 3D
- conceptualise beyond the information given
- transfer and adapt ideas from the familiar to a new problem
- identify the simple, elegant solution from complex, disorganised data
- are able to represent ideas aesthetically in a variety of ways: visual, spatial, verbal, mathematical
- reflect and be constructively self-critical
- independently research knowledge to solve problems
- demonstrate skilfulness and ingenuity in manufacturing skills and techniques
- show awareness of social/ethical considerations (e.g. finite supplies of resources, sustainability).

Religious education
- recognise and express personal feelings and empathise with others
- are sensitive to social issues and concerned about equality
- construct and sustain a complex argument, integrating ideas from a number of sources
- are able to think independently, to intervene appropriately and continue an argument
- raise questions and see relationships between questions
- are able to reflect upon and integrate different kinds of knowledge
- appreciate the value system of others and defer judgement or conclusion
- can use intuition and personal experience as shared learning with others.

Adapted from: Eyre D and Lowe H (2002) (eds) *Curriculum Provision for the Gifted and Talented in the Secondary School*. London: David Fulton

Personal and social education
- identify with the feelings of others
- reflect on personal mistakes and rectify them
- are self-confident
- have self-control

- are flexible and comfortable with change and novelty
- use effective communication skills
- build good relationships
- are able to persuade and negotiate
- work well collaboratively
- lead and inspire others
- are aware of social and environmental issues
- enjoy community activities
- are good in debate, discussion, role-play
- display honesty and integrity
- show initiative and persistence.

Derived from: Goleman D (1999) *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Company

Appendix 4: Effective Practice in Teaching and Learning of MAT pupils in Wales:
(Taken from: Regional School Improvement Consortia flyer 2019/05)

- Good teaching and learning activities challenge and stretch all MAT learners.
- Subject level MAT criteria constructed by staff.
- Curriculum time for pupils to explore their own interests in a structured way.
- Curriculum that challenges higher level skills and thinking.
- Enhanced feedback for learners in order to stretch and challenge.
- Time for pupil-led group learning with teacher input to ensure challenge as required.
- Specific enrichment activities and visits embedded within the curriculum.
- Engagement with families and wider community.