

THE WILLOWS PRIMARY SCHOOL



GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

Safeguarding Statement

The school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Author: G & T Co-ordinator

Date: January 2024

Review Date: January 2026

Aims

- To identify the highest performing pupils within the school
- To identify children who have the potential to achieve highly.
- To develop the potential of these pupils whatever their gifts or talents.
- To develop self confident, enquiring individuals who see education as a continual and enriching life-long process.
- To develop staff awareness, strategies and teaching skills to provide challenge within the curriculum.
- To provide appropriate curriculum enrichment and extension materials within the school's resources.

What does gifted and talented mean?

Gifted describes pupils who have the ability to excel academically in one or more subjects. This includes children with the potential to develop these abilities. They are working at a level significantly above the national expectation for their age group or above the level of others in their class in an academic subject such as English or mathematics.

Talented describes pupils who have the ability to excel in practical skills such as sport, leadership, artistic performance

Identification of Gifted and Talented Children

A range of identification processes will be used to identify the highest performing pupils and also the pupils who have the potential to achieve highly.

- Teacher observation, assessment and records of progress.
- Feedback from other school staff – TAs, sports coaches
- Curriculum specialist identification.
- Summative assessment – PUMA, PIRA tests.
- Reports from outside agencies, subject specialists or advisors
- Checklists of gifted and talented characteristics (see next section)
- Subject-specific checklists may be used (Appendix 1)
- Annual Parental Nomination
- Extra-curricular information including the Wall of Fame and West Berks Sports Network events

Gifted and talented pupils are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. However, they are more likely than most pupils to:

- think quickly and accurately;
- work systematically;
- generate creative working solutions;
- work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations;
- communicate their thoughts and ideas well;
- be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns;
- achieve, or show potential, in a 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 or aspect of the curriculum;
- demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspects of work.

G & T register

Children identified as Gifted and Talented will be placed on the school's Gifted and Talented register. Children can move on and off the gifted and talented register at different times in their schooling. Identification is based on their current performance and not all pupils can be expected to stay on the register for their whole school career.

Underachievement

We recognise the issue of underachievement and are aware that gifted and talented pupils may fall into different categories such as:

The very able high flier

- These are learners who demonstrate their ability to learn in a variety of ways.
- They soak up challenge and respond with understanding and enjoyment.
- They often have a maturity and insight beyond their years and can cope with being different and ahead of their peers
- Often they are self-motivated, have very supportive parents and teachers who provide opportunities for extending and enriching experiences
- They are receiving differentiated and challenging opportunities and they are responding at high levels

The coaster

- Often these children complete only the minimum expectation for learning despite having the potential to achieve more. They are usually compliant in lessons and can show pages of neat work with repetitive practice without an error.
- They may well be quiet, sensitive children who perceive that the teacher is always occupied
- They may be deliberately conforming to peer group expectation and may be loath to draw attention to themselves
- They seldom ask questions because they always understand or perceive their questions as different from the usual
- This pattern of low-level response can often become a habit and responding to the joy of challenge is seldom, if ever, experienced
- Sometimes, daydreaming or decorating work fills the time when the stint to comply with teacher expectation has been completed

The disaffected

- Sometimes problem behaviour masks potential ability
- The teacher's attention is understandably absorbed by the confrontational behaviour, particularly if the learner is aggressive, disruptive in the classroom, very withdrawn or inclined to be highly active
- They have few positive outlets for their mental and creative energy and, sadly, too many temptations to engage in anti-social behaviour. Such behaviour becomes a habit and requires intensive co-operative work between school, home and the learner over a prolonged period of time

Provision Within School

Our school caters for the additional needs of gifted and talented pupils and takes a holistic approach to provision based on five key principles:

- breadth – extending the range of what is learnt, widening the material beyond the statutory national curriculum programme of study
- depth – within the curriculum and increasing the level of challenge encouraging pupils to develop more sophisticated, complex or abstract thinking,
- faster pace/acceleration – enabling pupils to engage with material which is more demanding and provides progression into more advanced mathematical ideas
- independence – link to personalised learning
- reflection – making understanding explicit

There are five key strands to this provision at The Willows Primary School:

a) A Mastery approach to learning

All children in the school, whether gifted, talented or otherwise, benefit from a rich curriculum that is designed to meet their needs and interests. Teachers take into account the different abilities of all the learners when planning lessons. Tasks are differentiated so that an appropriate level of challenge leads to good progress.

All pupils require depth in their learning in order to secure the expected standard, and some pupils will go deeper still in their learning and understanding - exceeding the expected standards. This approach is focussed on deep, secure learning for all, with extension (widening and broadening their knowledge skills and understanding) rather than acceleration (rapidly moving on to new content).

The overall aim is to provide high quality instruction with appropriate support, and allow enough time for understanding and practice, then all pupils have quality opportunities to master/meet the expected standard by the end of the year, with some pupils also exceeding the expected standard by the end of the year.

Impact in the classroom

- time and resources are used effectively to present the learning differently to those pupils who require more time, and to deepen and extend the learning of those who have met the objective at their first attempt
- pupils who require more time have provision that is personalised to their specific needs so that they are able to achieve the objective
- pupils who require greater challenge are provided with meaningful opportunities to deepen and extend their knowledge and understanding of the same content through higher order tasks and enquiry

b) Universal provision - Extending and enriching the curriculum:

The school offers a wide variety of enrichment opportunities such as educational excursions, guests visiting the school from the local community and a range of after school activities that the children can access and benefit from.

- Visiting experts and range of materials and resources.
- Visits from poets, writers, actors, dancers etc and workshops
- Use of subject specialists / Mentoring by either a similarly talented or suitable encouraging adult

- Use of additional support, Teaching Assistants, other adults, older pupils and parents for one to one or group work to extend child in a specific area (social or academic)
- Links with outside agencies, other schools etc.
- After school clubs, covering academic as well as other activities
- Participation in special competitions
- Themed weeks

c) Targeted provision

Provision in lessons for gifted and talented learners can take many forms. The children are often taught in groups within the class, receiving additional support for activities from the teacher or from a teaching assistant to provide for next steps in learning. Teachers use targeted questions to stretch and challenge the most able learners and plan extra challenge or opportunity in lessons such as art and physical education. In other cases pupils may be taught in separate groups or have different work set for them because it best suits their needs.

d) Strategies for Challenge:

Staff use a variety of techniques and strategies to provide for challenge in the classroom:

- i. What does challenge look like? Children need challenges that:
 - Are not correct/incorrect
 - Allow social and emotional dialogue
 - Are open-ended
 - Are meaningful to pupils – based on their experiences, choices and interests
 - Emphasise thinking skills and reflection
 - Involve their questions
 - Involve higher order skills – analogy, memory, abstract thinking, reasoning, learning to learn, etc
- ii. When planning for challenge, teachers provide opportunities for:
 - Flexible lesson structures
 - Problem solving and investigation to develop reasoning and thinking skills.
 - open-ended activities, questions and tasks.
 - Introducing elements of competition within and outside peer group.
 - Self-competition – target setting
 - creative and productive thinking
 - independent learning with access to ICT beyond ICT lessons
 - Differentiation through pace, task, dialogue, support, outcome, resource, content and / or responsibility

e) Focused / intensive provision

For some children who have unique abilities or talents additional focused support can be provided where school resources allow. This can take many forms, for example instrumental tuition from a music teacher, mentoring or study support from a teacher or access to local ‘master classes’.

Some pupils may be targeted for specific support because schools have been asked to identify them as part of a specific support programme, for example programmes that address underachievement.

Support for gifted and talented learners can best be achieved through a partnership between parents, carers, the school and other local and regional providers. Parents and carers can work in partnership with the school in a number of ways, for example;

- Supporting gifted and talented pupils in their ambitions through praise and encouragement.
- Ensuring that any homework is completed or that quiet space can be found for personal study or reflection when required.
- Encouraging participation in appropriate after school and weekend activities.
- Opportunities offered by providers such as libraries, museums, sports facilities, theatre groups and performing arts organisations, many of which run programmes for gifted and talented learners
- Being aware that gifted and talented children can often be under pressure and need time to relax and socialise with others.

The Role of the G & T Co-ordinator

- Monitoring early identification – pupils from other schools, new intake etc.
- Arrangements for identification within the school.
- Keeping a register of G & T pupils, which identifies pupils by name, age, year group, and areas of ability or subject expertise.
- Ensuring all staff involved with identified children know of their particular needs and are encouraged to make provision for them.
- Updating colleagues on best practice or new initiatives as they arise.
- Monitoring the progress made by the children and updating the register annually.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The school's provision for Gifted and Talented children is evaluated through: -

- a) Lesson observations with a focus on challenge
- b) Scrutiny of planning
- c) Discussion with pupils
- d) Work sampling and / or moderation of work
- e) Analysis of test data
- f) Monitoring by a named governor

Appendix 1 – Identifying Gifted & Talented Pupils in

- a) English
- b) Maths
- c) Science
- d) ICT & Computing
- e) DT
- f) History
- g) Geography
- h) RE
- i) MFL
- j) Art & Design
- k) Music
- l) PE

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in English

Pupils who are gifted in English are likely to show some or all of the following characteristics.

Creative flair

- writing or talking in imaginative and coherent ways
- elaborating on and organising content to an extent that is exceptional for their age

Stamina and perseverance

- using any suitable opportunities to produce work that is substantial and obviously the product of sustained, well-directed effort

Communicative skills

- involving and keeping the attention of an audience by exploiting the dramatic or humorous potential of ideas or situations in imaginative ways
- taking a guiding role in helping a group to achieve its shared goals, while showing sensitivity to the participation of others
- writing with a flair for metaphorical or poetic expression
- grasping the essence of particular styles and adapting them to their own purposes
- expressing ideas succinctly and elegantly, in ways that reflect an appreciation of the knowledge and interests of specific audiences
- using ICT to research ideas and create new text

Ability to take on demanding tasks

- researching, comparing and synthesising information from a range of different sources, including ICT
- engaging seriously and creatively with moral and social themes expressed in literature

Arguing and reasoning

- creating and sustaining accounts and reasoned arguments at a relatively abstract or hypothetical level, in both spoken and written language
- grasping the essence of any content and reorganising it in ways that are logical and offer new syntheses or insights
- justifying opinions convincingly, using questions and other forms of enquiry to elicit information and taking up or challenging others' points of view

Awareness of language

- understanding the nature of language and showing a special awareness of features such as rhyme, intonation or accent in spoken language, and the grammatical organisation of written texts
- showing an interest and enthusiasm for language study, including an awareness of the relationship between the sounds and words of different languages that are not apparent to most of their peers.

Some pupils who are gifted in English may generally perform at levels of literacy or oral skills that are notably advanced for their age group. Other pupils may have unusual abilities in specific areas -- such as poetry, drama, or their understanding of the nature and structure of language -- while being unexceptional in the rest of their English work. It is vital to have a whole-school perspective in order to recognise how exceptional ability in English is revealed through other subjects. It is important to make and review holistic judgements of pupils' attainments across different areas of the curriculum.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Mathematics

Pupils show their special talents in mathematics in a range of ways and at varying points in their development. Pupils who are gifted in mathematics are likely to:

- learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly;
- work systematically and accurately;
- be more analytical;
- think logically and see mathematical relationships;
- make connections between the concepts they have learned;
- identify patterns easily;
- apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts;
- communicate their reasoning and justify their methods;
- ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics;
- take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems;
- sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions;
- be more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry.

Some pupils who are gifted in mathematics perform at levels that are unusually advanced for their age. For example, a seven-year-old may work confidently with the mathematics described at level 3 in the national curriculum and begin to work successfully with concepts described at level 4. Other pupils with exceptional mathematical potential may not demonstrate it in this way. For example, pupils may have high levels of mathematical reasoning but be unable to communicate their ideas well orally or in writing. Sometimes gifted pupils reject obvious methods and answers as too easy, and opt for something more obscure. In these cases, formal testing alone is insufficient as a basis for identification. It is often helpful for teachers to provide enrichment and extension activities and to observe pupil responses to challenging activities.

When identifying pupils who are gifted in mathematics, it is important to judge whether they are likely to benefit from an enhanced or special programme. The pupils need to be able to keep up with their ordinary work, and teachers need to successfully accommodate them.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Science

Pupils who are gifted in science are likely to:

- be imaginative
- read widely, particularly science or science fiction
- have scientific hobbies and/or be members of scientific clubs and societies
- be extremely interested in finding out more about themselves and things around them
- enjoy researching obscure facts and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena
- be able to sustain their interest and go beyond an obvious answer to underlying mechanisms and greater depth
- be inquisitive about how things work and why things happen (they may be dissatisfied with simplified explanations and insufficient detail)
- ask many questions, suggesting that they are willing to hypothesise and speculate
- use different strategies for finding things out (practical and intellectual) -- they may be able to miss out steps when reasoning the answers to problems
- think logically, providing plausible explanations for phenomena (they may be methodical in their thinking, but not in their recording)
- put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions (including their teacher's!)
- decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables
- consider alternative suggestions and strategies for investigations
- analyse data or observations and spot patterns easily
- strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts, and take pleasure, for example, from reading gauges as accurately as possible (sometimes beyond the accuracy of the instrument)
- make connections quickly between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers
- think abstractly at an earlier age than usual and understand models and use modelling to explain ideas and observations. For example, pupils may be willing to apply abstract ideas in new situations or use higher-order mathematical skills with some complex abstract ideas when offering explanations
- understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence
- be easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas
- enjoy challenges and problem solving, while often being self-critical
- enjoy talking to the teacher about new information or ideas
- be self-motivated, willingly putting in extra time -- (but they may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly)
- show intense interest in one particular area of science (such as astrophysics), to the exclusion of other topics.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in ICT & Computing

Pupils who are gifted in ICT and computing are likely to:

- **demonstrate ICT capability significantly above that expected for their age**
for example, key stage 2 pupils may be comfortable meeting the demands of the key stage 3 curriculum
- **learn and apply new ICT techniques quickly**
for example, pupils use shortcut keys for routine tasks effectively and appropriately; they quickly apply techniques for integrating applications such as mail merge and databases
- **use initiative to exploit the potential of more advanced features of ICT tools**
for example, pupils investigate the HTML source code of a website and apply features such as counters or frames to their own web designs
- **transfer and apply ICT skills and techniques confidently in new contexts**
for example, having learned about spreadsheet modelling in a mathematical context, they recognise the potential of applying a similar model in a science investigation
- **explore independently beyond the given breadth of an ICT topic**
for example, they decide independently to validate information they have found from a website; having learned control procedures for a simple traffic light model, they extend their procedure to include control of a pedestrian crossing
- **initiate ideas and solve problems, use ICT effectively and creatively, develop systems that meet personal needs and interests**
for example, they create an interactive fan club website that sends out a monthly newsletter to electronic subscribers (either working on their own, or collaboratively with peers)

When identifying pupils who are gifted in ICT, it is important to remember that they may not be gifted in all aspects of the subject. For example, some pupils may be able to use high-level programming skills to solve control problems, but may not be as good at constructing and investigating databases.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in DT

Pupils who are gifted in design and technology are likely to:

- demonstrate high levels of technological understanding and application
- display high-quality making and precise practical skills
- have flashes of inspiration and highly original or innovative ideas
- demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues
- be sensitive to aesthetic, social and cultural issues when designing and evaluating
- be capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products
- get frustrated when a teacher demands that they follow a rigid design-and-make process
- work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience and empathise with users' and clients' needs and wants.

Teachers may identify pupils who are gifted in design and technology by:

- performance at an unusually advanced national curriculum level for their age group
- the outcomes of specific tasks
- evidence of particular aptitudes
- the way pupils respond to questions
- the questions that pupils ask themselves.

It is important for teachers to allow time for personal interaction with pupils. By observing the techniques and strategies that pupils use to tackle problems, teachers may pick up on gifts that do not come to light through more formal assessment procedures. It is important to acknowledge that these pupils may wish to hide the extent of their gifts.

The pupils who are gifted in design and technology may be a very different group from those with gifts and talents in other subjects. The breadth of designing and making means that some of them will have abilities in a specific area -- for example working with food, using computer-assisted design (CAD) or high-quality making -- but not in others.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in History

Pupils who are gifted in history are likely to show some or all of the following characteristics.

Literacy

- perform at levels of literacy that are advanced for their age;
- show particular skill at inference and deduction when reading texts;
- synthesise information to present a cogent summary;
- use subject-specific vocabulary confidently;
- follow and contribute effectively to a line of argument in discussion by making relevant contributions and substantiating points with evidence;
- access complex source materials with growing independence.

Historical knowledge

- have an extensive general knowledge, including a significant amount of historical knowledge;
- develop with ease a chronological framework within which to place existing and new knowledge;
- demonstrate a strong sense of period as a result of study.

Historical understanding

- grasp quickly the role of criteria in formulating and articulating a historical explanation or argument;
- understand and apply historical concepts to their study of history;
- be able to draw generalisations and conclusions from a range of sources of evidence;
- seek to identify patterns and processes in what they study, while being aware of the provisional nature of knowledge;
- appreciate that answers arrived at depend largely on the questions asked;
- recognise how other disciplines can contribute to the study of history and draw readily on what they learn in other subjects to enhance their historical understanding.

Enquiry

- be able to establish and follow a line of enquiry, identifying and using relevant information;
- be good at reasoning and problem solving;
- think flexibly, creatively and imaginatively;
- show discrimination when selecting facts and evaluating historical evidence;
- manipulate historical evidence and information well;
- appreciate the nature of historical enquiry;
- question subject matter in a challenging way;
- be intrigued by the similarities and differences between different people's experiences, times and places and other features of the past;
- thrive on controversy, mystery and problems of evidence;
- show resourcefulness and determination when pursuing a line of enquiry.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Geography

Pupils who are gifted in geography are likely to:

- **understand concepts clearly so that they can apply this understanding to new situations in order to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions**
they understand geographical ideas and theories, and apply them to real situations;
- **communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word**
they communicate knowledge, ideas and understanding in ways that are appropriate to the task and audience (for example, writing formal letters and reports, producing brochures representing particular groups). They learn subject-specific vocabulary, use it accurately and are able to define words;
- **reason, argue and think logically, showing an ability to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences**
they use and apply mathematical principles (such as area, shape, spatial distribution) and formulae (such as Spearman's rank correlation coefficient) to solve geographical tasks and problems. They identify their own geographical questions and establish sequences of investigation. They understand, and are able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships (for example, within and between physical and human environments);
- **enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information**
they transform relief shown by contour lines into three-dimensional models in their minds. They are competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required in geography -- aerial photographs, satellite images, maps of different types and scales, GIS systems and so on;
- **be confident and contribute effectively when taking part in less formal teaching situations**
they take part readily in role-play situations or simulations and enjoy contributing to outdoor fieldwork;
- **relate well to other people, showing an ability to lead, manage and influence others, appreciating and understanding others' views, attitudes and feelings.**
they are willing to share their knowledge and understanding, and steer discussion;
- **have a more highly developed value system than most pupils of their age**
they have well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and the inequalities of life in different places;
- **have a wide-ranging general knowledge about the world**
they have good knowledge of where places are in the world and of topical issues;
- **be able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another**
they transfer their knowledge of physics, for example, to understanding climate. Or they transfer knowledge of the industrial revolution from history to help explain the location of industry in the UK;
- **be creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solution to a problem**
for example, if faced with the problem of storm pipes being unable to cope with sudden storm surges in an area, they might suggest taking measures like afforestation to reduce storm surges, rather than proposing technical improvements to the pipe system. If faced with the problem of congested roads, they might suggest taxing cars more heavily, improving public transport or changing land use patterns, rather than building bigger roads.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in RE

Pupils who are gifted in RE are likely to:

- show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary;
- make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices;
- be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts.

In more general terms, they may also:

- have highly-developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research;
- show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

The identification of pupils who are gifted in RE should be approached on the basis of distinct RE ability, skills, competencies and insights. The teacher's professional judgement is crucial. RE teachers who know their pupils and their work, and bring professional talent, expertise and awareness to the subject, are best placed to identify gifted pupils. However, especially if not RE specialists themselves, they will probably find it helpful to talk to other teachers.

Giftedness in RE is not the same as being religiously gifted. Teachers may find it helpful to consider how being gifted in RE compares with being gifted in sport, music, mathematics or poetry.

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Modern Foreign Languages

Pupils who are gifted in modern foreign languages are likely to:

- **have a strong desire to put language together by themselves**
they apply principles from what they have learned to new situations, transforming phrases and using them in a different context, often with humour
- **show creativity and imagination when using language**
they often extend the boundaries of their knowledge and work beyond what they have learned, not wishing simply to respond and imitate, but to initiate exchanges and to create new language
- **have a natural feel for languages**
they are willing to take risks and see what works, knowing instinctively what sounds right and what looks right; they are acutely and swiftly aware of the relationship between sound and spelling
- **pick up new language and structures quickly**
they may have excellent aural and oral skills and may be able to cope with rapid streams of sound and identify key words at an early stage; they may also display outstanding powers of retention, both immediately and from one lesson to the next
- **make connections and classify words and structures to help them learn more efficiently**
they are able to evaluate new language critically, recognising the grammatical function of words
- **seek solutions and ask further questions**
they may test out their theories and seek to solve linguistic problems, sometimes challenging the tasks set and trying to understand their relevance to the language-learning process
- **have an insight into their own learning style and preference**
they may say how they like to learn vocabulary or structures; they are clear about the type of tasks they like doing; they may show or display an ability to work independently, without supervision, and to make effective use of reference material
- **show an intense interest in the cultural features of the language being studied**
they may use idiom in the language itself and explore the history and the traditions of the language; some pupils may wish to share their knowledge with their peers

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Art and Design

Pupils who are talented in art and design are likely to:

- **think and express themselves in creative, original ways**
they want to follow a different plan to the other pupils, challenge the tasks given, or extend the brief in seemingly unrelated or fantastic directions
- **have a strong desire to create in a visual form**
they are driven by ideas, imagination, flights of fancy, humanitarian concerns, humour or personal experience; they persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher
- **push the boundaries of normal processes**
they test ideas and solve problems relating to concepts and issues; they explore ways to depict ideas, emotions, feelings and meanings; they take risks without knowing what the outcome will be; they change ideas to take into account new influences or outcomes
- **show a passionate interest in the world of art and design**
they are often interested in a specific culture (possibly relating to their own cultural background or sense of identity), particular art forms, contemporary culture or youth culture
- **use materials, tools and techniques skilfully and learn new approaches easily**
they are keen to extend their technical abilities and sometimes get frustrated when other skills do not develop at the same time
- **initiate ideas and define problems**
they explore ideas, problems and sources on their own and collaboratively, with a sense of purpose and meaning
- **critically evaluate visual work and other information**
they make unusual connections between their own and others' work; they apply ideas to their own work in innovative ways
- **exploit the characteristics of materials and processes**
they use materials and processes in creative, practical and inventive ways; they explore alternatives and respond to new possibilities and meanings
- **understand that ideas and meanings in their own and others' work can be interpreted in different ways**
they use their knowledge and understanding to extend their own thinking and realise their intentions; they communicate original ideas, insights and views

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in Music

Pupils who are talented in music are likely to:

- be captivated by sound and engage fully with music
- select an instrument with care and then be unwilling to relinquish the instrument
- find it difficult not to respond physically to music
- memorise music quickly without any apparent effort, be able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after one hearing)
- sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase -- the music makes sense
- demonstrate the ability to communicate through music, for example to sing with musical expression and with confidence
- show strong preferences, single-mindedness and a sustained inner drive to make music.

Pupils more often show their musical talent through the quality of their response than the complexity of their response. Musical quality is very difficult to define in words, as music is a different form of communication to language. The closest we can get is to say that it 'sounds right': skills and techniques are used to communicate an intended mood or effect. Therefore musical talent is at least as much about demonstrating a higher quality response *within* levels as about attainment at higher levels. Musical talent can be seen at every level of attainment.

Pupils who have a talent for music show a particular affinity with sound. This type of talent is sometimes hard to identify, especially when it is not combined with more general giftedness. It is however often most significant, since it may be a pupil's only route to real success, increasing their self-esteem and motivation for other areas of learning. Some research points to the fact that there may be different types of intelligence, and that each of us may be more intelligent in some areas than others. This is often the case in music -- talented musicians may not demonstrate talent or giftedness in other areas.

Some teachers believe that music is *only* accessible for pupils with talent: that pupils are either musical, or not musical. This is not the case. All pupils can develop musical skills, knowledge and understanding. Some may need more or less help, but this is no different from any other subject. Teachers need to recognise the different needs of all pupils, including not only those who are talented but those who are more generally gifted across several subjects. The musically talented will need appropriate extension and development, while the more generally gifted pupils will need challenging musical contexts that enable them to apply their more general abilities.

Music provides a context in which generically gifted pupils (that is, those who are more generally gifted across several subjects) can be identified and developed. In music, pupils have to deal with a complex range of different and simultaneous factors and bring them together when making and responding to music, using skills which are often associated with giftedness. Teachers have often commented on the way that quickness in remembering rhythmic patterns suggests the ability to think quickly and assimilate information. Similarly, a difficulty with remembering patterns can indicate learning difficulties across all subjects -- teachers have found that music can help them to identify children who may need help.

Because music is abstract, it provides a way of identifying and developing skills that are not language dependent. This means that it can play a particularly important part in helping to recognise giftedness in pupils whose language skills have not yet developed, especially those for whom English is not their first language.

Recognising talent in music

Musical talent may not be a constant potential that can be realised at any age. If the talent is to be fulfilled, it may have to be recognised at an early stage. This is especially true for some instrumental skills that require early development. In secondary schools, there may be talented pupils who have not been recognised. These pupils need to be identified as early as possible, to ensure that their abilities are developed. In many cases, this will include providing opportunities for instrumental tuition for those who show musical talent. Pupils who have already been having specialist lessons may present further challenges and will need to be encouraged to bring their instrumental skills into the classroom. Often the hardest challenge is to help these pupils balance

their high levels of skill in performing on an instrument with the development of broader musical skills, knowledge and understanding, for example through creative activities.



Berkshire Music Hub – guidance notes for schools re students with Exceptional Musical Ability (EMA)

Indicators for identifying exceptional musical ability or musical giftedness and talent: Younger children – (three or more could trigger intervention).

The child:-

- Is involving him/herself in music at every possible opportunity and displays increased concentration times when engaged with music as opposed to other activities
- has an extraordinary (for age) musical memory
- constantly asks to be allowed to play an instrument
- sings well and singing accompanies play or work activities
- finds it difficult not to respond physically to music
- invents new music
- is making extraordinarily fast progress on an instrument
- picks up and retains information about music and is able to reproduce it through singing or playing, speaking about it or movement
- seems to possess some musical skills like singing in tune, a good sense of pulse, a feel for harmony, when in others it has to be taught

Musically talented older children often

- progress significantly faster than pupils of a similar age or experience
- show a remarkable aptitude for their age in pitch discrimination or rhythmic awareness
- display evidence of an exceptional musical memory or aural awareness, memorise music quickly without any apparent effort, are able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after one hearing)
- show a need to create their own music
- display evidence of a particular aptitude for performance to an audience
- have an innate understanding of structure, phrasing or harmony in music which is reflected in performance
- are inclined to practise and /or play at every opportunity (over a significant amount of time)

- are deemed to be exceptionally suited to the instrument being learned e.g. making a sound way beyond expectations for age and stage

Additionally:

Musical giftedness:-

- is at least as much about demonstrating a higher quality response levels as about attainment at higher levels
- can be seen at every level of attainment.
- Is where a child demonstrates an innate association and response to music without necessarily showing it through instrumental/vocal playing)

Musical quality is very difficult to define in words, as music is a different form of communication to language. The closest we can get is to say that it 'sounds right': skills and techniques are used to communicate an intended mood or effect. Therefore musical ability is at least as much about demonstrating a higher quality response *within* levels as about attainment at higher levels. Musical ability can be seen at every level of attainment.

Children who are musically gifted show early developmental signs of musical precocity, which may include noticing off-key music, remembering melodies, singing in tune, fondness for playing instruments in preschool, rhythmic ways of moving and speaking, humming to themselves, tapping rhythmically while working, and sensitivity to environmental sounds (waterfalls, rain on the roof, etc.). Researchers recognise such indicators of precocious musical talent as an innate ability to identify pitch (i.e., to imitate pitch with precision), precise rhythmic ability, intense interest in a variety of music, and an ability to learn and express music through recognition and imitation.

Although early intervention and instruction are not necessary for developing musical talent, they appear to be significant factors in determining a child's full realisation of a musical gift. Research on child prodigies indicates that exceptional musical abilities are often acquired through optimal environmental conditions. Important contributing factors include self-motivation; extensive support from family members, mentors, and teachers; appropriate resources (instruments, lessons, and exposure to musical activities); and rigorous practice.

What to do/next steps

If you feel that a child in your school is musically very talented, then please bring this to the attention of the Music Hub so that the child can be assessed musically and appropriate support made available. If you are unsure about a child – do ask for an assessment by a colleague from the Music Hub.

philiplitchfield@berkshiremaestros.org.uk

Identifying Gifted and Talented Pupils in PE

Pupils who are talented in PE are likely to show many or all of the following characteristics in their performance and approach to PE, sport and dance.

Approach to work

They may:

- be confident in themselves and in familiar contexts
- take risks with ideas and approaches, and be able to think 'outside the box'
- show a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance.

Effective performance

They may:

- 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
- be creative, original and adaptable, responding quickly to new challenges and situations, and often finding new and innovative solutions to them.

Body skillfulness and awareness

They may:

- have a high degree of control and coordination of their bodies
- show strong awareness of their body in space
- combine movements fluently, precisely and accurately in a range of contexts and activities.

Some pupils may have unusual abilities in specific aspects of the programme of study or areas of activity, such as:

- evaluating and improving performance through leadership
- acquiring, developing and performing advanced skills and techniques
- conceptual understanding, shown through the sophisticated selection and application of advanced skills, tactics and compositional ideas for their age
- particularly high levels of fitness for their age, in both specific and general areas
- specific strengths in general areas, such as games activities or dance activities.

Some pupils perform at high levels in sport or dance in the community, for example basketball, high jump, jazz dance or sailing. In some cases, these pupils' performance may be too specific to be easily related to the national curriculum level descriptions for PE.

Teachers should be aware that age and physical maturation can lead to better performance at certain ages and stages, but they are not a characteristic of talent in PE and sport.