



Identification of Gifted and Talented Pupils – Southfields Primary School

We need to be able to identify our Able, Gifted and Talented pupils so that we can stretch and challenge them intellectually.

However, as a school, our focus remains on gift creation rather than just gift identification.

Definition

“The term ‘gifted’ refers to those pupils who are capable of excelling in academic subjects such as English or History.

‘Talented’ refers to those pupils who may excel in areas requiring visio-spatial skills or practical abilities, such as in games and PE, drama, or art.”

Department for Education

Identification

*A model for providing for G&T that should give all a chance to show their abilities in all areas is called **PIP** (Provide, Identify, Provide). Explained this is:*

- *"**Provide** the conditions and opportunities for all pupils to demonstrate high ability.*
- ***Identify** from these events learners who are working, or have the potential to work, beyond their year group.*
- ***Provide** challenging learning opportunities for identified pupils that will further extend their learning."
(DCSF, 2009:20)*

It is important that our identification systems look beyond the obvious candidates but also actively seek out those who are underachieving or who have a disability.

Key methods in identification include:

- Observation
- Parent or carer nomination
- Peer nomination*
- Self-nomination
- Nomination by other individuals or organisations e.g. outside clubs or organisations such as gymnastics clubs or scouts etc.
- Identification by psychologists

*One form of identification that is often overlooked is peer nomination. Students in the classroom are generally very good at nominating Gifted and Talented students. One example of a peer nomination exercise takes the form of a game of make believe. Students are asked to imagine that they are stranded on a desert island and must name the classmate who would be the best organiser (leader, persuader), best judge (settles arguments, fair), fixer (improves things), inventor (invents, discovers), entertainer, etc (Jenkins, 1978). Teachers will need to take care to guide students with regard to the necessary criteria to be considered.

Teacher nomination - School-wide identification processes

Teachers may become aware of the existence of a Gifted and Talented student in their classrooms through his/her performance on assessment tests or exams. They may become aware of a student's unusual approach to a problem or a student displaying aptitudes or behaviours beyond their years in any given subject. Careful recording and observation is recommended to determine the need for further investigation.

At Southfields, we use a wide range of methods for identification, including using Renzulli's Three Ring Model (appendix 1) as one of our basis for observation. Another method of initial observations, particularly with young children, which we use is the 'Nebraska Starry Night' (Eyre, 1997) – appendix 2. The Nebraska Starry Night is designed to be used over a certain time period, e.g. a week or a month. During the given period, as teachers spot a behaviour that fits on the map, they mark an 'X' in the relevant area. At the end of the given time period, teachers use the map to decide whether further identification methods should be used. A further method used for identification is the General Checklist for Identifying Gifted and Talented Students as shown below.

General Checklist for Identifying Gifted and Talented Students

Gifted and Talented students 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 mental speeds faster than physical capabilities and so be 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
- have exceptional curiosity and constantly want to know why
- be inventive and original when interested
- ask searching questions, which tend to be unlike other students' questions
- often see the unusual rather than the conventional relationships
- be able to pose problems and solve ingeniously
- display intellectual playfulness, fantasise and imagine and be quick to see connections and to manipulate ideas
- read rapidly and 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 be 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 be impatient with repetition
- be keen and alert observers, note detail and be 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 sometimes be hesitant as they search for and use the correct word
- become absorbed for long periods when interested and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change
- persists in completing activities when motivated
- often set very high personal standards – be 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 (e.g. can be particularly critical of school)
- be philosophical about everyday problems and common sense issues
- be perceptive in discussion about people's motives, needs and frailties
- daydream and seem lost in another world
- show sensitivity and react strongly to things causing distress or injustice
- often take a leadership role
- empathise with others and be very understanding and sympathetic
- be confident and competent
- express their own feelings
- attribute ideas to others
- be self-effacing
- reflect on their own performance
- give inventive responses to open-ended questions
- have a keen sense of humour in the unusual and be 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 the wherefore

Subject-Specific Checklists

These checklists are useful examples for refining teacher observation. They are by no means a fully comprehensive set of subject lists.

Mathematics

Gifted and Talented students:

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

(Summary from: Roy Kennard *ibid*) Adapted from: Eyre D and Lowe H (2002) (eds) *Curriculum Provision for the Gifted and Talented in the Secondary School*. London: David Fulton Publishers (A NACE/Fulton Publication)

English

Gifted and Talented students:

- show close reading skills and attention to detail
- are sensitive to nuance of language use, use language precisely
- have a well-developed, sophisticated sense and appreciation of humour
- contribute incisive, critical responses, can analyse own work
- are able to read with more meaning, drawing on inference and deduction; can 'read between the lines'
- show attention to spelling and meanings of words
- cope well in dual-language medium
- have fluency and breadth of reading
- show pleasure and involvement in experimenting with language
- 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

(Summary from: Geoff Dean ibid)



Science

Gifted and Talented students:

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

(Summary from: Pat O'Brien ibid)

Information Technology

Gifted and Talented students:

- use ICT hardware and software independently use ICT to support their studies in other subjects
- use ICT to solve problems use their skills and knowledge of ICT to design information systems and suggest improvements to existing systems
- consider the limitations of ICT tools and information sources
- consider some of the social, economic and ethical issues raised by the use of ICT
- consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use

(Summary from: ACCAC 2003)

Geography

Gifted and Talented students:

- possess wide ranging general knowledge about the world are enthusiastic observers of the 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 interrelationships
- analyse confidently and draw conclusions
- draw meaningful generalisations from detailed information
- appreciate varying viewpoints and attitudes
- formulate opinions and use evidence to support their 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

(Summary from: David Leat ibid)

Art

Gifted and Talented students:

- 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 and are able to go beyond the conventional
- can sustain concentration, constantly refining ideas
- have confidence using a wide range of skills and techniques
- are quick to learn and transfer skills

(Summary from: Mary Fitzpatrick ibid)

History

Gifted and Talented students:

- 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
- are aware of the provisional nature of knowledge
- make imaginative links between the topics studied and with other subjects in the curriculum
- 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

- 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
- make suggestions which reflect independent thought concerning the connections, causes and consequences of historical events, situations and changes
- reach soundly based evaluations and conclusions based on considered use of evidence and are prepared to support them with reasoned argument
- use subject-specific vocabulary and terminology with accuracy and confidence

(Derived from: Sue Mordecai ibid)

Physical Education

Due to the wide range of sports and physical activities, it would be impossible to produce a checklist to cover all skills and abilities. Therefore, specific sports and physical activities will require their own differentiated and detailed checklists.

Gifted and Talented students:

- 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 movement with an intuitive feel for elegant movement
- show a 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 and evaluate their own and others' work, using results to effect improvement
- take the initiative, demonstrating leadership and independence of thought

(The above generic checklist is derived from Gardner 1999)

Modern Foreign Languages

Gifted and Talented students:

- show an interest in and empathy for foreign cultures
- recognise grammatical patterns and functions of words
- use linguistic/non-linguistic clues to infer meaning
- are able to listen and to reproduce sound accurately
- extrapolate general rules from examples, can make connections
- are curious about how language 'works', its meaning and function
- are able to use technical vocabulary to discuss language
- identify and memorise new sounds and 'chunks' of language
- are flexible in thinking, showing flair, intuition and creativity
- apply principles from a known language to the learning of new ones have effective communication strategies



(Summary from: Hilary Lowe ibid)

Music

(The following is a generic checklist. Specific musical activities require detailed and differentiated checklists.)

Gifted and Talented students:

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



(Summary from: Frankie Williams ibid)

Religious Education

Gifted and Talented students:

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

(Summary from: Mark Cope ibid)

Design and Technology

Gifted and Talented students:

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



(Summary from: Trevor Davies ibid)

PSHCE

Gifted and Talented students:

- 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
- show initiative and persistence
- display honesty and integrity

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

Drama

Gifted and Talented students:

- have an ability to engage effectively with a role
- demonstrate an expressive speech ability in the use of voice and accents
- can confidently move and use gestures appropriate to character
- are able to invent and sustain a role confidently perform a scripted or improvised character to an audience
- enjoy drama improvisation and/or mime and dance drama
- have the ability to engage effectively with an audience
- engage meaningfully with others in the performance of a play text
- understand and enjoy the uses of the stage including design and technical effects
- possess a wide range of knowledge about drama and theatre
- are able to discuss and have personal opinions about drama/ theatre productions
- reflect on the use of language in a play text
- have the ability and vision to realise a text from 'page to stage'

(Summary from: Webb, A. BELB 2007)

At Southfields, we believe that the various methods of identification suggested should not be used merely as a checklist, but are given as guidelines to support professional judgement and teachers need to be aware that identification needs to be supported by a range of evidence.

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Southfields Primary School



Guidelines for Identification of G&T Pupils