

CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
ABLE GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY
This policy applies to the whole school

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office. This policy is also publically available on the school website

Legal Status:

This policy is integral to the Regulatory Requirements, Part 1 Quality of Education Provided (curriculum) (teaching) of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations currently in force. In our school the term 'staff', in the context of safeguarding, is inclusive of all staff and is also inclusive of pupils on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, directors and proprietor.

Related Documents:

- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning policy, Subject and Faculty policies and documents, including, where relevant schemes of work, lesson resources and faculty review documents
- Differentiation policy, Planning policy, Marking policy, Homework policy

Monitoring and Review:

This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher who is supported in this process by:

- The Headteacher (is responsible for overseeing the organisation of the curriculum and appropriate planning and delivery of lessons appropriate to the needs of Gifted and Talented pupils (ensuring that all classes are taught the requirements of the courses and that all lessons have appropriate learning objectives;
- The teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented, Senior and Middle Leaders will observe the way subject/s is/are taught throughout the school. They review long-term and medium-term planning and ensure that appropriate teaching strategies are used.
- It is intended that the review and development of the curriculum will support enthusiastic and inspirational teaching. The process of review plays a key role in the continuing professional development of the teaching staff at City of Rochester School.

The Headteacher undertakes a formal annual review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Signed:

Date Reviewed: July 2019
Date of Next Review: July 2020
Version No. 1
Policy No 04:001



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher



Claire Cooper
Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Trustee

Gifted and Talented Pupils at City of Rochester School: Although all our pupils have special educational needs inclusive of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) they also have a wide ability range and it is inevitable that some pupils will meet the able, gifted and talented criteria. In this way **City of Rochester School** caters for pupils that **meet the following descriptions:**

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- **Gifted:** pupils who have a broad range of achievement at a level well above average, typically in the more academic subject
- **Talented:** pupils who excel in one or more specific fields, typically those that call for performance skills, such as sport or music, but who do not necessarily perform at a high level across all areas of learning.

City of Rochester School aims to identify and provide for those pupils 'who either demonstrate exceptionally high-level performance, whether across a range of endeavours or in a limited field, or those whose potential for excellence has not yet been recognised by either tests or experts.'¹

In catering for pupils of these descriptions, City of Rochester School does not explicitly use the labels 'Gifted' and 'Talented'. City of Rochester School fully acknowledges that those pupils with particular abilities, attainment, and/or dedication to a subject must be stretched and challenged. City of Rochester School operates in this manner in order to ensure that there is no exclusion of 'the contribution of motivation, application and dedication' within our identification process, alongside measures of attainment.²

Additionally the School seeks to ensure that no hierarchy can develop between attributes – e.g. between 'gifts' and 'talents'. Finally, we believe that all pupils are likely to find the learning environment more motivational if it avoids permanent labelling and instead is perceived as being more flexible and attainable through identifying behaviour ('excellence') rather than innate attribute (e.g. 'giftedness').³ Achieving their potential is a fundamental value of City of Rochester School.

While we recognise and cater for these particular categories of pupils in our school, at the same time, we respect the right of all pupils, irrespective of differences in ability, to access various areas of learning, both for their self-fulfilment, and for their eventual development into active and responsible adults. We value the individuality of all our pupils and ensure that our teaching and learning takes into account the needs of all the pupils. We are committed to giving all our pupils every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We believe that by ensuring appropriate provision for gifted and talented pupils, we will ensure the highest quality of education for all City of Rochester School pupils.⁴

City of Rochester School aims to develop independent learners who exercise curiosity and creativity in all areas of their endeavours. We recognise the risk of our most able, keenest and highest-performing pupils becoming 'dependent' rather than 'independent' learners, and the importance of providing a safe, encouraging environment in which they can take risks and view failure as part of the learning process to avoid this. In this way we will equip them for the challenges of higher education and their future careers, which will require resilience and the ability to adapt and cope in new environments.⁵

City of Rochester School recognises that pupils who are gifted and talented may fall within one or more of the following categories. Through personalised provision within lessons, appropriate enrichment activities, and individual support from individual teachers we aim to cater for all of the following:

- 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;
- 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 pupils who do not want to be different from their peers so they may merge into their peer group; often such pupils are incorrectly identified as underachievers or simply less able.

¹ Freeman, pub. Ofsted, *Educating the very able*, 1998

² Ofsted, *Providing for Gifted and Talented Pupils*, December 2001, pp. 12

³ For a discussion of the merits and limitations of 'Gifted' and 'Talented' terminology see Distin, *Gifted Pupils*, pp. 14-15; Hymer, *Gifted and Talented Pocketbook*, 2009, pp. 8-13

⁴ Neumark, *The Issue: Gifted and Talented – best practice for all is best practice for the most able*, Times Educational Supplement, October 2008.

⁵ NACE, *Able Learners, Independent Learners*, 2010, pp. 2; Department for Education, *What works in improving the educational achievement of Gifted and Talented pupils?*, 2008.

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Aims of our Gifted and Talented Provision at the School

- **Personal:** To celebrate every individual by ensuring that Pupils are stretched and challenged so that they reach their full educational potential. The needs of Gifted and Talented Pupils must be catered for individually and specifically, and not just with a 'broad-brush' approach.⁶
- **Precise:** Clear School-wide process of identification and documentation of gifted and talented pupils, and effective provision across subjects.
- **Inclusive:** Our gifted and talented provision includes and develops different types of subject areas, uses quantitative and qualitative measures for identifying excellence, includes non-invitation events that are open to all, and believes that all pupils should aspire to excellence.
- **Diverse:** The School acknowledges the many different aspects, angles and manifestations of gifted and talented pupils, and that no two pupils are the same.
- **Fluid:** The School recognises that excellence manifests at different times, whilst in some cases pupils may plateau or their patterns of talents may change, and that there is a need for regular assessment and re-identification.
- **Broad:** We aim to cater for a wide range of different interests, and of ultimate career areas, with variety of outcome a key ambition. We do not seek to produce one 'type' of pupil, or to propel all pupils into particular subject or career areas

Identification of Excellent pupils: The identification process for gifted and talented pupils is designed to be flexible and responsive, in accordance with the body of educational research that suggests high-level attainment patterns and pupil enthusiasm can change over time and may manifest unexpectedly at any stage in a pupil's academic growth.⁷ With this in mind, identification will occur on a sixth-monthly cycle, with no preference given to pupils who have or have not previously been identified. In this way we recognise that, with exposure and encouragement, some pupils may begin to demonstrate excellence that have not done so before. This represents successful gifted and talented provision, and shows City of Rochester School's commitment to a 'mastery'-based framework of provision for Gifted and Talented-type pupils where pupils are given the opportunity to demonstrate and develop qualities of excellence, rather than a 'mystery'-based framework where pupils are designated as having innate abilities of an enduring and immutable nature.⁸

In early November (after the autumn half-term break) and in May (shortly prior to the half-term break) Senior Leaders/Middle Managers and the teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented will be asked to arrange a meeting with all subject teachers in their department. At this meeting the department will use their subject criteria to nominate 1-2 pupils per class whom they believe, based on performance in their subject, deserve to be considered as gifted and talented. The gifted and talented criteria for each subject are created by the Head of Department and/or Headteacher. These criteria include (but are not restricted to):

- Subject attainment (e.g. in tests, assessments, etc.)
- Subject curiosity/enthusiasm
- Creative expression/imagination within a subject area
- Demonstration of wider 'life skills' (e.g. leadership, problem-solving, etc.) within a subject area

A full list of the generic and subject identification criteria can be seen in our related documents.

City of Rochester School seeks to ensure direct input in identification from teachers and middle and senior leaders as excellent will manifest in different forms across subjects, and those best equipped to recognise it are subject experts.⁹

⁶ Bailey R, Pearce G, Winstanley C, Sutherland M, Smith C: Stack N, Dickenson M (2008) A systematic review of interventions aimed at improving the educational achievement of pupils identified as gifted and talented. Technical report. In: Research Evidence in Education Library. London: GIFTED AND TALENTEDI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London

⁷ Goodhew, *Meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented Pupils*, 2009, pp. 9; Hymer, *Gifted & Talented Pocketbook*, 2009, pp. 8

⁸ Mystery vs. mastery approach: Hymer, *Gifted and Talented Pocketbook*, 2009, pp. 16-19; the concept of excellent being achieved through consistent practice is predominant in many current works spanning Science, Business and Education, such as Syed's *Bounce*, and can be traced back to Ericsson, *The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance*, 1993.

⁹ Goodhew, *Meeting the needs of Gifted and Talented Pupils*, 2009, pp. 29

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The Headteacher, in conjunction with the teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented, will collate these lists, and compare teacher nominations with performance in aptitude tests. Those pupils whose score is in the top 10% of pupils in the year group will be noted, and where such a pupil has at least one subject nomination they will be considered as Gifted and Talented. In this way City of Rochester School ensures that both quantitative attainment and qualities demonstrated within the classroom are taken into account in identification, ensuring that those populations of pupils that could be described as 'Gifted' or 'Talented' are identified and provided for.

The Headteacher, in conjunction with the teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented will create two G&T lists, which will be available to all teaching staff on the school network: those who have three or more subject nominations, or a high aptitude test score and at least two subject nominations, who will be on the 'Core' list of Gifted and Talented Pupils. This list will cater for those that fit the description of a 'Gifted' child as included above. The second list is the 'Specialist' list, which includes those pupils who have received one or two subject nominations. This would include those with high aptitude for one particular academic subject, or who have shown aptitude in another such as Drama, Sport, and Music etc. In this way the 'Specialist' list will cater for those that fit the description of a 'Talented' pupil as included above.

In addition these lists may contain pupils whose enthusiasm, diligence and application are such that they are performing above expectation in a subject, and whose commitment to the subject and to undertaking additional learning renders them suitable for inclusion within the talented list. Where dual exceptionality exists, i.e. a pupil is listed both as Gifted and Talented, the Headteacher will discuss the pupil the staff team in order to ascertain what limitations or additional requirements might exist for challenge work, and to ensure that all staff are fully aware of the pupil's needs and interests.

Additional support for Gifted and Talented pupils

Whilst Gifted and Talented Pupils will have access to all usual forms of support on offer at City of Rochester School whenever they are struggling (e.g. form tutor, teacher support, welfare officer, school counsellor etc.) sometimes the problems encountered by a gifted and talented pupil may relate directly to their abilities, and therefore may require discussion with teachers/middle or senior managers. In these instances a personalised plan will be put in place to assist the pupil, and may include regular mentoring meetings with the relevant member of staff; communication with parents; close monitoring of pupil work and workload; etc. Like many other pupils, gifted and talented pupils can often fail to achieve their potential and may be unable to cope with their abilities and can suffer from many difficulties. 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 peers;
- problems with concentration;
- not understanding their ASD and other individual needs that are prevalent
- living in own 'private' world.

Gifted and Talented pupils, like all pupils 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 pupils with ASD pupils feel greater levels of social threat and will be less emotionally resilient than others. It is difficult to make generalised statements about features of the failing able child but there is recognition of certain characteristics which are considered in regard to the management of special needs.

- **Coping Strategies.** Able pupils with special needs do not necessarily have heightened emotional resources. Often the opposite is the case. These pupils may have suffered from inaccurate assumptions based on coping expectations which fall short of requirement. Sometimes such pupils are skilled at masking difficulties.
- **Parental Expectation.** No-one would assume for example a gifted musician need be similarly gifted in say English, chess or Drama. Often able pupils are expected to achieve 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.
- **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 pupils may use language forcefully to protect self-esteem. In some cases a lack of tolerance is proportional to the command of verbal reasoning.

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- **Social Difficulties.** Able pupils, like all pupils 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.
- **Agenda Search.** Able pupils 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.
- **More Stretching/Challenge** Sometimes able pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils 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.

In assisting these pupils, City of Rochester School will:

- help them to understand the reasons behind how their minds works, how their any under achievement and that this is a temporary inconvenience and not a lifelong handicap. They require help in managing the dichotomy in learning variation;
- rectify untoward responses to learning style as quickly as possible;
- help them develop key life skills. Able special needs pupils 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;
- assist them in utilising strengths. Able special needs pupils may require specific help in learning how to learn. Given the real strengths, these could be employed to help overcome any weaknesses;
- reassure and encourage. Such pupils may need to become more accepting towards themselves, especially if they have become reliant on seeking the advantage from expressing ability. Like all pupils, 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.

Teaching and Learning – provision for Gifted and Talented Pupils

Whilst Gifted and Talented Pupils will be able to access additional enrichment activities, City of Rochester School recognises that the most significant provision for Gifted and Talented Pupils occurs within the classroom on a daily basis.¹⁰ Where teachers plan engaging lessons with stretch and challenge in-built and accessible to all pupils, including those that are gifted and talented, then high levels of progress will be made by all.

By taking this classroom-focused approach to provision City of Rochester School aims to ensure that all pupils are working to the best of their capabilities. This includes those that have been identified as gifted and talented, and thus this provision results in the best standards of education for all and a culture where excellence and additional effort are encouraged and recognised.¹¹

Subject teachers should aim to stretch and challenge pupils so that they work within the zone of proximal development identified by Vygotsky. Working in this way will help to ensure the development of new skills, knowledge and conceptual understanding. Gifted and Talented Pupils may require additional help or scaffolding in order to achieve this.

In aiming to stretch Gifted and talented pupils in this way, teachers will use a personalised approach to differentiation, using their knowledge of each pupil's abilities, knowledge and character to inform their approach. The subject teacher will be able to combine this with their subject expertise to create suitable activities and resources.

¹⁰ Goodhew, *Meeting the Needs of Gifted and Talented Pupils*, 2009, pp. 12

¹¹ Reis & Renzulli, *Is there still a need for gifted education? An examination of current research*, Learning and Individual Differences 20 (2010)

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In doing so the subject teacher may design work that promotes the following attributes, which is a guide rather than an exhaustive list of approaches inclusive of:

- a high degree of subject knowledge;
- understanding of how to plan classwork and homework in order to increase the pace, breadth or depth of the coverage of the subject;
- the capacity to envisage and organise unusual projects and approaches which catch pupils' attention and make them want to explore the topic;
- the use of tasks which help pupils to develop perseverance and independence in learning through their own research or investigation, while ensuring that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to tackle the work effectively on their own;
- the use of demanding resources which help pupils to engage with difficult or complex ideas;
- the use of ICT to extend and enhance pupils' work and the opportunity to present the outcomes to others;
- the ability to deploy high-level teaching skills in defining expectations, creating a positive classroom climate for enquiry, asking probing questions, managing time and resources, and assessing progress through the lesson and
- the confidence to try out new ideas, to take risks and to be prepared to respond to leads which look most likely to develop higher levels of thinking by pupils¹²

Enrichment

Gifted and Talented pupils will also be given additional enrichment opportunities. This will take various forms, depending on opportunities available and what is appropriate for each child. The teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented will have responsibility for including enrichment-type opportunities for Gifted and Talented pupils in their subjects, which might include the chance to attend talks, go on relevant visits, attend a reading group, etc. These activities may be provided solely for gifted and talented pupils, or where they are suitable for all interested pupils and have particular pertinence for gifted and talented pupils' enrichment may be made available for all, with particular encouragement of G&T pupils to attend.

The teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented will plan to meet termly with each G&T pupil, and where a tutor or subject teacher identifies a need for more frequent meetings these may occur on a regular basis. The purpose of this meeting will be to review the pupil's attainment, their engagement with and enjoyment of learning, and to ensure that their needs are being met and interests catered for.

Enabling Curriculum Entitlement and Choice: Curricular organization is flexible to allow pupils to have enrichment and to work beyond their age and/or phase, and across subjects to help maximise individual potential.

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

Leadership: All teachers have a responsibility to be aware of and to implement best practice for gifted and talented pupils. This is supported and led by the Headteacher.

Policy: The gifted and talented policy is integral to the school's philosophy. The policy directs and reflects best practice in the school.

Engaging the Community, Families and Others: Parents and carers are informed of developments and encouraged to be actively engaged in extending their pupils' education.

Responsibilities for provision

Classroom teacher

- Familiar with the gifted and talented pupils in their classes

¹² 'What does good teaching of gifted and talented pupils involve?', in *Providing for Gifted and Talented Pupils*, December 2001, pp. 25

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- Plans for enrichment and challenge routinely within lessons
- Tracks the progress made by gifted and talented pupils in their classes
- Contributes examples of pupils' work for the department's webpage
- Assists with the planning and implementation of subject-related and cross-curricular gifted and talented events

Form Tutors/HLTAs/Learning Support

- Familiar with the gifted and talented Pupils in their tutor group
- Supports and encourages tutee engagement in subjects and subject-related events
- Refers pupil to Assistant Head/Middle Managers or Headteacher where pupil would benefit from more individual attention

The teacher in charge of Gifted and Talented

- Familiar with the Gifted and Talented pupils in their subject areas
- Schedules opportunities to discuss gifted and talented pupil progress in regular faculty meetings
- Ensures data collection enabling tracking of gifted and talented pupil progress in their subject areas
- Monitors provision for gifted and talented pupils during faculty lesson observations
- Maintains the Departments' Webpage information relating to gifted and talented pupils on the City of Rochester School website through regular submission of work – this may be done by liaising with the appropriate – Subject Leader/s to obtain pupil work.
- Supports Subject Leaders in planning subject-related and cross-curricular events
- Plans and implements Faculty-related and/or cross-curricular events (e.g. talks, workshops, trips, etc.)
- Creates and monitors the departmental strategy for Excellent Pupil provision
- Updates the departmental strategy for Excellent Pupil provision within the departmental handbook
- Monitors provision for gifted and talented Pupils during departmental lesson observations
- Tracks the progress made by gifted and talented Pupils in their subject area
- Plans and implements subject-related gifted and talented pupil events (e.g. talks, workshops, trips, etc.) and assists with the planning and implementation of cross-curricular events

Headteacher and Assistant Head

- Familiar with all gifted and talented pupils
- Meets annually with each gifted and talented pupil, and more regularly where necessary. Creates individual support plans where a gifted and pupil may be struggling, in coordination with subject teacher and/or tutor.
- Works with the teacher in charge of gifted and talented and teachers to support their departmental strategies for pupil provision
- Monitors provision for gifted and talented pupils during lesson observations
- Tracks the progress made by gifted and talented pupils
- Delivers relevant whole-school training on gifted and talented provision
- Works with classroom teachers to support their enrichment of lessons
- Works with the teacher in charge of gifted and talented and teachers to plan and implement suitable subject-related events (e.g. talks, workshops, trips, etc.)

Parental communication: City of Rochester School recognises the essential role played by parents when they are able to understand their child's needs and to support the school's provision for gifted and talented pupils. The Headteacher will communicate directly with parents when they raise queries and will also contact parents in the event of exceptional achievements or where problems may exist for a gifted and talented pupil. Where appropriate, the Headteacher will also arrange a presentation to be delivered for parents that delineates the nature and provision of our gifted and talented provision to ensure that they are optimally informed.

All classroom teachers are expected to be familiar with the gifted and talented pupils for whom they have responsibility, and should provide detailed feedback to parents on pupils' attainment at Parents Evenings.

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