

West Exmoor Federation



Gifted and Talented Policy

July 2007

West Exmoor Federation - Gifted and Talented Policy

Within the West Exmoor Federation, each school promotes a secure and happy environment and nurtures an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance. All pupils are valued and our ethos celebrates diversity of experience, interest and achievement.

Aims

Within the West Exmoor Federation we aim to provide an appropriate education for all pupils within an atmosphere that facilitates the opportunity for children to realise their potential. Children identified as gifted and/or talented should, therefore, have the opportunity to work at higher cognitive levels or have the scope to develop their specific skills or talents. They should also be provided with appropriate opportunities to improve in their areas of comparative weakness. Throughout this process, where appropriate, we aim to provide staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils with pertinent training and support.

Objectives

- To promote equal opportunities for all children, regardless of gender, race, background or ability
- To establish a definition of gifted and/or talented pupils
- To successfully identify the gifted and/or talented, addressing achievement, ability (or potential) and social or personal factors, utilising subject-specific and general criteria
- To identify in-school and external help in supporting the gifted and/or talented
- To develop the planning of enrichment and extension activities
- To provide appropriate opportunities, support and motivation for a gifted and/or talented child to achieve highly
- To establish clear expectations of teachers, and others, including support staff
- To clarify the role of the Gifted and/or Talented Pupil coordinator

Role of the Co-ordinator

Responsibilities include:

- Facilitating and monitoring identification of gifted and/or talented pupils
- Maintaining a Gifted and/or Talented register
- Encouraging/advising staff to make appropriate provision for gifted and/or talented pupils
- Updating colleagues on best practice or new initiatives as they arise
- Monitoring progress made and reviews of individual children
- Co-ordinating Able Pupil Enrichment Programme
- Liaising with parents and external agencies

Definition

At Lynton we use a broad definition of the term talented and/or gifted.

We recognise that using IQ as a sole indicator is unreliable and that this fails to recognise activity within the creative areas of the curriculum. We therefore regard gifted and/or talented pupils to be those that:

- demonstrate in one or more areas of the curriculum abilities which place them in the highest achieving 20% of our school population
- have a broad spectrum of high ability when viewed against national norms
- have a particular skill or ability in a discrete area, e.g., athletics, swimming, viola playing, painting

Within the West Exmoor Federation, we recognise that ability and achievement are not the same thing. We therefore include within our definition of gifted and/or talented pupils, those who have the potential to achieve highly even if they are currently under-achieving. We also recognise that achievement levels for some pupils may change as they progress through the school.

Identification

Within the West Exmoor Federation, we seek to identify the specific abilities and talents of many pupils rather than labelling a particular group of pupils as our gifted and/or talented. It is expected that these children will be identified by their class teacher, or in the case of extra-curricular activities, by a parent or other adult. Effective educational provision enables effective identification to take place. Subjective observations over a period of time are generally more appropriate than inappropriate attempts at using objective tests to gauge ability. Focused teacher observations, discussion between colleagues, monitoring of pupils and information from parents/carer's and peers all combine to enable and to encourage opportunities for identification of the gifted and/or talented. ID cards from WSCC are also used to further establish whether or not a child is gifted and talented.

Teachers who identify a child as being gifted and/or talented should inform the Lead Teacher for Gifted and/or Talented Pupils.

Provision

Within the West Exmoor Federation, we work hard to ensure a positive environment for all our pupils. We value and recognise achievement in all areas of endeavour equally. Outstanding work in academic areas is given the same degree of regard as outstanding performance in sports or in music. Working hard is seen as worth rewarding, and independent thinking is actively encouraged.

Gifted and/or talented pupils need to:

- Have a secure environment in which they feel happy to display ability and take risks
- Have a teacher who expects excellence, not just competence
- Experience challenge, sometimes to the point of finding work difficult

- Engage in exciting intellectual discussion and debate
- Have access to learning opportunities that recognise the range of learning styles
- Be given appropriate praise and set appropriate targets
- Know that they can ask searching questions and will be given a considered response
- Know that having a go is more important than getting it right
- Be recognised as an individual with strengths and weaknesses

The needs of the majority of our' gifted and/or talented children are met as part of our normal differentiated classroom provision, although the exceptionally able may need additional provision and/or an individually tailored programme of work. A range of differentiation methods (by outcome, task, questioning, support, etc) is used, and through these we can ensure appropriately high expectations for all our pupils.

Our provision for gifted and/or talented pupils includes both enrichment and extension. Enrichment provides the opportunity to explore more broadly; extension facilitates the pursuit of greater depth. The majority of enrichment and extension opportunities are identified and evaluated in short-term planning, although medium term plans may also contain reference to the needs of the gifted and/or talented.

Within the West Exmoor Federation, we are aware that gifted and/or talented pupils are not necessarily any more industrious than others. In order that it is not seen as a penalty, extension work is given in addition to existing work only in carefully considered instances. The extension work we plan always has a clear purpose, which is linked to the lesson's overall learning objective and is not simply more of the same. Where appropriate, pupils themselves are encouraged to set their own targets and to suggest ways in which they may extend their own work.

Monitoring/Assessment

Across the West Exmoor Federation, formative and summative assessment is carried out on a regular basis in accordance with our Assessment Policy. This ensures that the progress of the gifted and/or talented is carefully monitored. In addition to this children listed on the Gifted and/or Talented register are monitored on a termly basis by the lead teacher.

Out of Class Activities

In some areas the chance to develop significant skills is only possible on an extra-curricular level. Within the West Exmoor Federation, we endeavour to offer a variety of extra-curricular activities, currently providing opportunities in sport and music.

Policy Review Procedures

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis. It will be due for review in July 2009