



St Paul's CE Primary School

More Able Policy

Adopted by: Curriculum and Achievement Committee

On: 3rd November 2021

Review: Autumn 2024



1. St Paul's vision for the teaching of more able children

As a Christian school, we believe that *all* our children are unique and special and have talents given to them by God. We aim to support the abilities, personal qualities and talents of all our children.

Our school holds the following views:

- We want to form a 'can do' attitude, which builds the resilience of our children as learners so that they can all reach their highest potential.
- We set high expectations and endeavour to plan learning outcomes which stretch and challenge all our children.
- We want our children to understand that real learning comes from making mistakes and using this as a learning opportunity. We value perseverance and enthusiasm for learning.
- We provide teaching which gives opportunities for higher order thinking and creativity, recognising that often learning isn't simply right or wrong.
- Our curriculum is broad and balanced. It inspires and engages children in their learning, provides progression and takes account of their individual differences and interests.
- We aim to enrich our children's learning with practical experiences, extra curricular activities and creative project days.
- We are flexible in the ways we group our children in their learning, grouping in such a way that they can learn from each other.
- We encourage our children (and staff) to love learning and to view their time in our school as only the beginning.

2. Definition of 'more able' and 'exceptionally able'

St Paul's defines 'more able' children as those whose progress significantly exceeds age related expectations across the curriculum or in specific subject areas. 'Exceptionally able' children are those whose attainment is at the very highest levels.

More able children may show particular strengths in areas such as: sport, drama, design and technology, music, creativity, computing, languages, science, religious education, art and design, problem solving in maths, or higher order English skills and levels of thinking.

At St Paul's our more able learners' needs are considered alongside all learners and challenge is a key component in all lessons for all learners. Everybody is provided with stretching and challenging activities that ask the children to problem solve, think creatively, reflect and question what they are doing.

Teachers often plan opportunities for children to self-select the level of challenge in the task they undertake.

3. Identification

The process of identifying more able and exceptional learners is on going and should begin when a child joins our school. Many more able learners are those who have exceptional abilities in at least one or more curriculum subjects. Identification of these abilities can occur through testing, teacher assessment and informal observations. St Paul's also believes that any child can be more able, including children with special educational needs, children who have English as a second language and those children whose potential is masked by other factors.

More able learners *may* present some of the following characteristics:

- think quickly and accurately;
- work systematically, although some may think laterally;
- 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; or
- demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects, within a particular subject, or aspects of work.

We monitor and track students' progress and attainment using the following strategies in order to ensure that they continue to progress as more able learners:

- assessment for learning;
- teacher assessment, including informal observations and conversations;
- use of optional end of year SATs; and
- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 SATs.

In addition to this, the school operates a more able register, which records pupils' abilities. The register is updated regularly providing opportunities for movement and flexibility.

We inform parents if their child is on the more able register.

In order to avoid any peer problems, we encourage all parents and staff to praise children for effort and determination: "fantastic concentration!" "You have chosen something really tough – well done – go for it." "I like the way you stuck at that problem."

We aim to foster a school and classroom ethos in which effort, enthusiasm, and perseverance are valued most highly. The brain works like a muscle, which can only grow through practice, hard work, determination and engaging in complex challenges.

3. Overall approach in the classroom

We see all our children and our staff as 'learners'. We recognise that children and adults do not always get things right first time and we only really learn from our mistakes. The provision in our classroom reflects this and children are encouraged to reflect on their mistakes and use them as learning opportunities. Teachers use assessment strategies rapidly and at the point of need in order to challenge their students.

The key message is the importance of providing stretch and challenge in the everyday classroom for all learners of all abilities.

In our school, we review what is happening in the classroom:

- Are children being provided with rich and meaningful learning experiences?
- Is openness to failure being encouraged?
- Are we praising perseverance?
- Are children being given challenging open-ended tasks?
- Are we constantly assessing children during the lesson?
- Are children being asked higher order questions?
- Are children being encouraged to ask their own questions?
- Are children's different learning styles being considered?
- Are children able to learn from each other?
- Are maths and English being taught through a creative skills based curriculum?
- Are children enjoying what they are doing so much that learning is happening without them realising it?
- Are children allowed thinking time to struggle with problems?

4. Provision for the 'more able' and 'exceptionally able'

More able children can be a delight and a challenge. There is no one way of supporting a more able child but a personalised approach should be adopted with regard to their academic, social and emotional needs. This is best achieved in partnership with parents and external organisations (e.g. using local experts, businesses and theatre groups), which may well take a significant role in provision.

The important thing to remember is the engagement and voice of the more able child in any discussions and decisions, taking account of their level of maturity, personal development needs and wellbeing.

St Paul's aims to support these children using the following strategies:

- differentiated learning outcomes and tasks;
- encouraging them to take control of their learning;
- challenging open-ended tasks throughout the lesson;
- higher order questioning;
- praising effort and perseverance;
- mastery approach to learning, encouraging deeper skills;
- fluid grouping and setting;
- more able intervention groups;
- using additional adults to target the more able children;
- mixed ability talk partners who are encouraged to explain and share their ideas;
- target setting; and
- enterprise projects.

5. Extra curricular activities

We want to enrich our children's learning as much as possible with practical experiences and creative project days. We aim to enhance our curriculum with a complementary enrichment programme, which includes activities such as music week, science days, maths days, and poetry and photography competitions.

We also aim to enhance our curriculum through after school clubs, such as dance, football, chess and French clubs.

6. Leader's responsibilities

The roles/responsibilities of our school's more able leader include:

- revising the school's more able policy;
- liaising with staff on the implementation of the policy;
- liaising with staff on the effective identification and provision for more able learners;
- liaising with the school's CPD leader on related staff training needs;
- overseeing and supporting complementary enrichment programmes;
- promoting the use of competitions, clubs and special events as part of 'stretch and challenge for all';
- liaising with relevant associations, such as NACE, other external agencies and community links; and
- liaising with the Transition Leader to ensure continuity and good communication within and between year groups and partner schools.

7. NACE

St Paul's is a member of NACE (the National Association for Able Children in Education):
<http://www.nace.co.uk>