



St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Academically More Able and Talented Policy

Date of Approval	11 th March 2024
Date of Next Review	January 2026
Review led by	School AMA Co-ordinator
Approved by	LGC
This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents	SEND Policy School Assessment Policy
Notes	



MISSION STATEMENT

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School strives to promote the education and development of all our children.

Learning through the love of Jesus Christ and empowered by his example, we celebrate our uniqueness and our distinctive gifts.

Growing in our Catholic faith we have high aspirations for all.



Aim high, live and learn with Jesus, everyone welcome



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Policy for the Academically More Able and Talented

Rationale

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we believe in providing the best possible provision for pupils of all abilities. We plan our teaching and learning so that each child can aspire to the highest level of academic and personal achievement. Provision for more able children is an integral part of the whole school teaching programme. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'academically more able' or 'talented' according to the national guidelines.

Note: Academically more able learners are described as "those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics or English." The DfE have produced studies where "Academically More Able" pupils were identified as those who entered the Key Stage above national expectations in English or mathematics.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Policy and the Equal Opportunities Policy.

Our definition refers to Academically More Able and talented children which also recognises academic, practical, creative, musical, physical, sporting and social performance. It also recognises that a child may possess this potential, although performance may not currently reflect this. We believe that provision is generally most effective when it is made within the classroom, through a stimulating, differentiated curriculum. We also recognise that in some cases, particularly with pupils talented in physical education and sport that we need to work with external partners to meet their needs.

Definition

Academically More Able pupils:

Excel in at least two academic subjects, demonstrating mastery at a greater depth or higher standard e.g. Maths, English, Science, or Computing

Talented pupils:

Have a particular ability in any of the other subject areas, such as the Arts including Music, Drama, Physical Education and Dance. We recognise that their excellence is often in non-core subjects and we do our best our best to support this, providing opportunities for the child to shine.

Aims

Our school's aim is to make provision for these children through differentiation in everyday quality first class teaching in their own year group (we do not accelerate children into older year groups).

The aim of this document is to ensure a consistent approach to the identification and support of the very able or gifted child through:

- An agreed, shared identification method, as early as possible of the “Academically More Able” child and the talented pupil
- Substantiating identification by the use of objective assessment measures, where appropriate
- Meeting pupils' needs with a range of appropriate teaching and learning strategies
- Raising staff awareness of the range of strategies available to them
- Create a climate of learning throughout the school
- Working in partnership with parents/carers to help them promote children's learning and development
- Making use of the wider community to enhance learning opportunities
- Continuing to intervene and enhance all children’s learning

As an approximate figure, between 5% and 10% of the children in our school may be considered as academically more able. Provision will be made for these children within normal class teaching, but, from time to time, we will provide enrichment or extension activities to promote their skills and talents still further.

There is a range of terminology used to describe this group of children including:

- Able pupils
- More able pupils
- The very able
- Exceptionally able
- Gifted children
- Talented pupils
- Those with exceptional talent
- Pupils with marked aptitude

Identification of Academically More Able & Talented Children

Identification is not an end in itself, nor is it an exact science. At St Joseph’s we use a range of ongoing strategies to identify Academically More Able and talented children. This process begins when the child joins our school. For some children we have pre-school records which give details of achievements and interests of particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers enable us to add details to these records.

All children undergo assessments after joining our Foundation Stage. This gives us information about the child’s skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We discuss each child’s profile with the parent, and use this information when planning for individual needs. As the children progress through school we assess them regularly and the individual needs of all children are regularly discussed during Pupil Progress Meetings.

Links with School’s Assessment Policy

Children undertake national tests in Year 6, which produce standardised results against the

national average. Additionally there is ongoing formative and summative assessment in all year groups especially in the main core subjects of maths, writing, grammar, spelling and punctuation, and reading. Formative assessment is daily and ongoing, and feeds into planning and delivery of lessons and future learning for children to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged.

Criteria for identification:

Aptitudes in English & Mathematics

Academically more able children are identified in English and Mathematics when they are working at mastery level above age related expectations.

These children may be demonstrating the following in English:

- High levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
- Use research skills more effectively to synthesise information;
- Enjoy reading, and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level;
- Use a wider vocabulary, and enjoy working with words;
- See issues from a broader range of perspectives;
- Use more advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

Academically more able children may demonstrate the following in Mathematics:

- Explore a broader range of strategies for problem solving;
- Are more curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
- See solutions more quickly, without needing to try all the options;
- Look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
- Work more flexibly, and establish their own strategies;
- Enjoy manipulating numbers.

Academically More Able pupils may:

- enjoy a creative and sometimes more cross curricular approach to teaching and learning; they often have a passionate interest in a particular area, for example a specific period of history or aspect of science.
- become more acutely aware of their progress and rapidly become despondent if they start to fall behind their peers.
- have less emotional maturity, despite being academically more able.
- have more diverse learning preferences and approaches and therefore need a wider variety of teaching strategies.
- find it difficult to fit in and work with their peers.
- only do the minimum amount of work, if not sufficiently academically stretched; they need to be 'pushed to deeper thinking'.
- have a disparity between their cognitive ability and their written outcomes as they can become impatient with the process of writing.
- Also have an SEN or disability

Involving parents/carers

Communication with parents is paramount and is an embedded part of the process of identifying and supporting our academically more able and talented children. Regular

discussions take place between the class teacher and parent/carer either through parents' evening or during other meetings before or after school. Staff work together with parents/carers to identify appropriate provision to ensure that the child is being adequately challenged, so they remain motivated in their learning/particular talent. Staff in school work closely with carers to signpost them to appropriate extra-curricular activities

Teaching and Learning

Our teachers plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all of our children. We give children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do, and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning, such as:

- A common activity that allows children to respond at their own levels;
- An enrichment activity that broadens a child's learning in a particular skill or knowledge area
- An individual activity with a common theme that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- The opportunity for children to progress through their work at their own rate of learning

Extra-Curricular Activities

At St Joseph's, from time to time, we offer a range of extra-curricular activities, run by teaching staff and outside agencies. These opportunities can provide useful insights into areas other than those offered in the standard curriculum.

EAL/SEN

Children for whom English is a second language and those who have SEN and/or disabilities may not be easily identified as having high ability. We must also watch out for late developers and those not reaching their full potential.

At St Joseph's we use two main types of curriculum provision for the Academically More Able and talented pupils.

- Enrichment
- Extension

Enrichment activities

Enrichment is used as a distinct teaching and learning strategy when there is planned intervention on behalf of a pupil or pupils, in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding beyond the usual parameters of a subject or topic. These are activities that provide experiences and activities beyond the regular curriculum, e.g. trips and visitors. Children are also identified for the enrichment courses run by the local SALT group of Schools.

Extension activities

Extension is used for academically more able and talented pupils; they will be encouraged to make greater use of higher order thinking skills to inform their work practices and their responses to tasks than might normally be demonstrated by pupils of their age.

The teaching of the Academically More Able or Talented pupil will take place in the classroom by the use of differentiation in all its forms and extension and enrichment activities.

Enjoyment is a key ingredient; enjoyment in education can serve very serious purposes. We must encourage the pupils to experiment intellectually, to take risks and to cope with failure. The following are ways that we can do this:

- Involve the Academically More Able child pupil in teaching the class;
- Organise group work to discuss various solutions and ways forward when a problem has been set, and then to report back.
- Ask Academically More Able pupils to devise the next stage of the work.
- After playing a game ask pupils to devise their own.
- Encourage pupils to suggest improvements to products, procedures and organisation.
- Ensure that pupils play a part in mapping out the route forward in their own learning programme.
- Set targets with them and have high expectations.
- Use higher order thinking skills such as prediction and hypothesis.
- Effective and challenging feedback.
- Supporting less able peers.
- Peer assessment and feedback.

Monitoring and evaluation

This policy and its effectiveness will be monitored by the More Academically Able and Talented Coordinator and Inclusion Manager in the following way:

- Discussions with the Class Teachers;
- Classroom observations;
- Looking at children's work;
- Monitoring planning;
- Classroom visits to look at the classroom environment;
- Documentation on pupils' progress and achievement;
- Pupil Progress meetings with the class teacher, Senior Leadership team and Inclusion Manager