

Eastbrook School

More Able and Talented Policy



Overview

Eastbrook School is committed to the on-going development of an environment and culture in which all students are enabled to perform to their highest potential. We aim to enable our More Able and Talented students to intellectually and socially develop their abilities, skills and personalities through high-quality gifted and talented provision in our day-to-day teaching, and through an exciting and challenging out-of-hours programme. We believe that the development of those students with the highest abilities will enrich and extend the learning experiences of all students.

The vision for the More Able students is one of ensuring that every pupil with the inherent ability to exceed normal expectations is recognised at the earliest opportunity, and that every possible measure is taken to ensure they achieve above their expected outcomes, with some taking public examinations earlier than their peers where intellectually and emotionally appropriate.

Definition

A More Able and Talented student is one who demonstrates a significantly higher level of ability than most students of the same age in one or more curriculum areas, or in any of the following:

- general intellectual abilities
- specific aptitude in one or more subjects
- creative or productive thinking
- leadership qualities
- ability in creative or performing arts
- physical ability

More Able and Talented students can be:

- high achievers across a range of subject areas
- high achievers in one subject area
- of high ability but with low motivation
- of very good verbal ability but with poor writing skills
- very able with a short attention span
- very able with weaker social skills
- keen to disguise their abilities

Identification

A More Able and Talented student is identified where standardised tests and / or teacher assessment and judgement show them as being amongst the most able 10% of students within their Year Group in any given subject area. This professional assessment is carried out through a range of methods including:

- scores from National Curriculum, NFER - MIDYISS and other tests
- external specialist examinations or assessments
- analysis of data from feeder primary schools
- sharing information with colleagues
- discussion with students
- consultation with parents/ carers
- analysis of ongoing assessment data, using open/ differentiated tasks and other appropriate measures, in line with current school, LA and national

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testing strategies

- collation of evidence from the student's own work

Strategies

All Eastbrook School staff have a shared responsibility to endeavour to create a stimulating environment for more able students. We support and encourage a high level of achievement for More Able and Talented students.

Specific and identifiable opportunities for extension and enrichment will be built into all our schemes of work.

We aim to:

- Create a culture where high-level achievement is celebrated.
- Encourage all students to become „independent learners“; for more able and talented students in particular, the Library and the internet provide invaluable resources for private study and research.
- Be keenly aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender and social circumstances on learning and high achievement, and to underpin all our practice with our policies on equal opportunities and inclusion.
- Use a variety of whole-school strategies including:
 - enrichment and special activities
 - creating opportunities for students to work with higher year groups, particularly when gauging potential emotional/ social effects of entry onto an Accelerated Learning Programmes
 - mentoring provision for More Able and Talented students; both Learning Mentors and peer mentors
 - creating opportunities to lead and serve on student bodies, such as the School Council
 - recognising high achievement and formally celebrating it within school and in the wider community
 - encouraging More Able and Talented students to mentor and support less able students

Classroom practice

We understand the importance of establishing students' prior knowledge, understanding and skills so as to avoid unnecessary repetition of work, which may effect motivation.

We are aware that, especially at KS4, there may be peer pressure to underachieve. We will challenge any evidence of this counter - culture whilst being sensitive to the need of many students to conform.

We are alert for the „bright but coasting“ student who could achieve excellent results if motivated and challenged further. For all students, lack of motivation and challenge leads to boredom and can lead to behaviour issues.

We are aware of the danger of assuming that More Able and Talented students are easier to teach than others.

The following strategies are employed where appropriate:

- Grouping by ability
- mixed ability groupings
- MA &T students leading mixed ability groups
- Extended day activities
- tasks differentiated by outcome

- short, medium and long-term individual target-setting
- open-ended tasks
- working at a high pace
- encouraging students to relate ideas to their own or external experiences/ draw parallels/ analogies
- accessing appropriate sources of information
- using more complicated language (especially in one-to-one teaching/ marking)
- puzzles and competitions (including prizes provided by outside sponsors, eg Maths Challenge)
- visiting speakers
- skipping stages which are already understood
- making presentations to other groups
- designing games to support the learning of others
- suggesting improvements to processes, products etc
- enhanced problem solving
- conducting interviews and designing questionnaires
- engaging in debate,
- critical analysis
- representing information diagrammatically or pictorially
- providing questions to given answers
- producing magazines or newsletters
- making video/ audio recordings/ Powerpoint presentations
- conjecturing (asking questions beginning with “What if...”
- making predictions or speculating
- coaching others

Specific Subject Arrangements

As well as taking notice of whole-school policy and considerations, each department is responsible for the development of its own procedures for meeting the needs of our M A and Talented Students, taking account of subject-specific factors. The department arrangements will ensure that schemes of work contain specific identifiable elements to develop and enrich those students within the More Able and Talented cohort.

Above all, we encourage all students to become „independent learners“:

- organising their own work
- carrying out tasks which stretch their capabilities, with little or no aid
- making choices about their work
- developing the ability to evaluate their work and so become reflective and self-critical

We do this by setting demanding targets for the work and homework of all students. We urge these students to constantly raise their own expectations of themselves in all curriculum areas.

Students’ abilities should be recognised and valued. Celebration of their achievements makes an important contribution to their development.

Out of the classroom

We aim to provide:

- a wide range of cross-curricular activities and opportunities
- enrichment events and local and residential trips
- the use of outside agencies for training and provision
- appropriate pastoral support
- masterclasses
- opportunities for involvement in LA and DFE initiatives and projects

Reviewed October 2017

- extra-curricular projects involving other Barking and Dagenham schools
- avenues for participation in the local community and its activities
- Parent and Carers' evening to celebrate and provide advice and guidance to support their More Able child.

Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy

This policy and its effectiveness will be reviewed regularly by departments, the Senior Leadership Team, the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator and students. Departments are subject to regular evaluation through line management and are reported on through the school system of 'Spotlights'.