



# Policy on High Ability Pupils

Reviewed : September  
2021

## SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

Apley Wood Primary School is committed to providing the very best for all pupils irrespective of where their talents and abilities lie. In keeping with this philosophy, the school identifies those children who show outstanding ability not only within their academic curriculum but also in music, art, sport and drama. The school does not believe this to be an elitist policy as every effort is made to meet the wide range of needs of all pupils in the school.

### Aim

Having identified our high ability and talented pupils we aim:

- To support the abilities, personal qualities and talents of all children.
- To ensure that learning is challenging and enjoyable.
- To employ a wide variety of methods of recognition of potential.
- To recognise under-achievement and to seek to remove it.
- To stimulate children through extra-curricular activities and curriculum enrichment
- To have the expectation that the curriculum for all will be extended by realising the needs of the most able

### Definition

At Apley Wood Primary School we define a pupil of **high ability** to be one who achieves, or has the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of their peer group. This may be in all areas of the curriculum or in a limited range e.g. intellectual, creative, artistic or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields.

These definitions reflect the distinction between ability and performance and recognise other factors in the development of a person's ability or talents.

Categories of high ability are:

- The **openly** able, i.e. they enjoy their talent and excel in all they do and are easy to identify.
- The **concealed** able, i.e. under-achievers who hide in their peer group or/and who can become disruptive if not offered the necessary enrichment.
- The **creative** able, i.e. appear eccentric; they often have unusual divergent thought patterns.
- The **talented** able, i.e. intellectually able but with a particular talent in one area such as the arts or sport.

In comparison with their peers, when engaged in their area of expertise, high ability and talented children will tend to:

- Show a passion for particular subjects and seek to pursue them;
- Master the rules of a domain easily and transfer their insights to new problems;
- Analyse their own behaviour and hence use a greater range of learning strategies than others (self-regulation);

- Make connections between past and present learning;
- Work at a level beyond that expected for their years;
- Show intellectual maturity and enjoy engaging in depth with subject material;
- Actively and enthusiastically engage in debate and discussion on a particular subject;
- Produce original and creative responses to common problems;
- Good powers of reasoning, dealing with abstractions, noticing relationships.
- Selecting and retaining relevant information.
- Good memory for words places, etc. Interested in words early and may have learnt to read early.
- Wide spoken vocabulary and good sentence structure, using accurate grammar.
- Creative, with good imagination and an interest in stories.
- Shows great intellectual curiosity, e.g. asks questions that are philosophical or religious at times.
- Scores 125+ on individual standardised tests.
- Skill in a particular area, e.g. art, music, sport well above that displayed by children of a similar age.

**NOTE:** not all of the above indicators will occur in the same child.

It is important to recognise that a child may be very able in some areas, but may appear on the SEND register for behavioural, social, physical/sensory or specific learning difficulties.

### **Characteristics of High Ability children:**

In general, gifted children exhibit the following characteristics:

They

- ask lots of questions and learn more quickly than others
- have very retentive memories
- are extremely curious and can concentrate for long periods of time on subjects of interest
- have a wide general knowledge and interest in the world
- enjoy problem-solving
- have unusual imaginations
- show strong feelings and opinions and have an odd sense of humour
- set high standards and are perfectionists
- prefer to spend time with older children, as well as adults, and prefer games and hobbies usually associated with older children
- may not be able to write neatly and writing is frequently messy
- have a tendency to be ambidextrous
- perform at a level well above their peers in art, music, sport, etc.

### **How High Ability Pupils can be Identified and Assessed:**

The identification of children with high ability must come from an amalgamation of evidence from a wide variety of sources:

- teacher observations
- parental observations

- peer group comments
- observation from outside sources, e.g. club coach or music teacher
- evidence from pupil's work
- pupil's own interests
- standardised tests
- evidence from out of school activities.

### **THE HIGH ABILITY AND TALENTED CO-ORDINATOR- Mrs Yvonne Thorpe**

Once a pupil has been identified as having high ability in any area, it is the responsibility of the co-ordinator to:

- Liaise with class teachers, parents, pupils & SLT.
- Make the teacher aware of the assessment data required.
- Collate the assessment materials and results.
- Work with the teacher to support the pupil and plan provision.
- Work with all parties to decide upon the strategies to be used to maximise learning and development.
- Train staff to provide for these aims to be achieved.
- Audit provision through The Quality Standards.

### **The Process of Identification at Apley Wood Primary School:**

All staff should familiarise themselves with the policy on high ability pupils.

Where staff feel that a pupil is displaying talents or ability over and above that usually expected then they will be identified at a pupil progress meeting which will be held with a member of SLT termly. Suitable provision for these children will then be identified and reviewed termly at a pupil progress meeting.

Standardised test scores will be taken into account and further tests may be administered. The use of standardised tests (NFER Accelerated reader, Reading and Spelling Ages) will help in identifying those with above average potential. Children will demonstrate a flair for writing across a range of genres and subjects in order to be assessed as working at a higher ability.

SLT will monitor the progress and attainment of these children on a termly basis and record evidence of additional support. This will also include the monitoring of teaching and learning within classes with a specific emphasis on these pupils.

### **High Ability and Talented in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

At Apley Wood Primary School we take particular account of the needs of children who have demonstrated that they have particular abilities in their Early Years.

Identification should be hand in glove with parents (especially the very young). Information is gathered from the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, the staff, parents, carers and previous settings (transition documents). Children need to be observed in different contexts, as they will not perform reliably.

There should be a sensitive awareness of cultural differences and any identification involving testing should not be paper based as they fail to catch ability at this age. Generally,

assessments should be ongoing, rather than carried out at fixed points. In any identification process, it is essential to look at unexpected responses from the child, looking at persistence, creativity and precision.

Children need to be provided with opportunities to build on early progress through flexible planning. For example, early readers will benefit from experience of books outside standard reading schemes.

Children who are working within the Early Learning Goal (ELG) or beyond from entry onwards in any area of the curriculum, will be identified at a pupil progress meeting where appropriate provision will be identified. Information will be gathered (from a range of sources) to inform their baseline assessment.

### **Classwork**

Enrichment/extension work is provided by teachers in all classes as part of normal differentiated provision. Differentiation provides activities requiring higher order thinking skills. The role of the teacher is vital in challenging the thinking of the HAT child. HAT children need to be challenged and so HAT workshop opportunities in school, the cluster and at local secondary schools will be made available.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

These are highly valued for the HAT child and include:

- Club activities
- Activity days and Master classes. These may be organised by the School, the Local Authority and the Cluster Partnership.
- Day and residential visits.
- The use of specialists e.g. visiting artists and authors or specialist teachers from partnerships with secondary schools / cluster schools.
- A broad, creative curriculum, giving children a chance to thrive.
- School societies / councils.
- Opportunities for performance.
- County schemes / competitions / festivals.
- Maths Challenges

### **Partnerships with Parents**

Parents, teachers and governors will work together for the needs of the HAT child. All Parents of identified HAT children will be asked about their children's strengths and achievements to help support the schools decision. Parents will also be involved in the reviewing process for their HAT child.

### **Partnerships with Pupils**

As part of our Character Education programme and 'Building Learning Power' ethos, we will ask all the children to consider their own skills and strengths. Thinking about the areas they feel particularly confident in and any achievements they are proud of so that all our children can be appreciated and celebrated in school. Furthermore, this will allow us to gather vital pupil opinion of their own and others gifts and talents. HAT children will be active participants in identifying their learning targets and areas for development in order to reach their full

potential within our school. Children will be asked for their opinion during the reviewing process.

### **Secondary Transfer**

The school will liaise with local secondary schools to provide information on HAT Pupils.

### **Support**

The school is able to access support through The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC/NACE)

**The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) has developed ten principles of good practice for schools.**

#### **They are:**

1. Flexibility in meeting needs
2. Valuing diversity, dealing with underachievement
3. A partnership with pupils and parents
4. The leadership of the Head teacher and Staff Team
5. Regular observation and review with early and prompt intervention
6. High teacher expectations
7. Positive attitudes by teachers who are prepared to "Go the extra mile"
8. Close primary/secondary liaison
9. Good use of external resources
10. The absence of labels, working to the child's strengths.

**Ratified at Full Governors Meeting:**

**Date of next review: September 2023**

AWPS High Ability Pupils Policy

Reviewed : September 2021

To be reviewed: Assistant HT/ Deputy Head teacher September 2023