

S20 POLICY FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

Last Reviewed: July 2009
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Responsible: A. Hemmings

1. RATIONALE

Underpinning the aims and values of the National Curriculum, it is important that the curriculum offered at The Bushey Academy provides opportunities for all students to learn and achieve at an appropriate level and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in the community.

2. AIMS

- 2.1. To ensure equal opportunities for all students to reach their potential.
- 2.2. To provide opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking, in the same way that the Academy provides for less able students.
- 2.3. To ensure that specific abilities of students are developed, e.g. in music, art, PE.
- 2.4. To ensure that the needs of the whole child are met – oral, spiritual, social and emotional, as well as intellectual.
- 2.5. To ensure a whole Academy consistent approach.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY

The Bushey Academy has adopted the terminology used by the DCSF, Ofsted and QCA, namely “gifted and talented”, “Gifted” refers to academic excellence and “talented” to creative excellence, e.g. in music, art, design and PE. Gifted and talented students will be the 5-10% deemed most able in the Academy, and each year group will be represented.

4. POLICY INTO PRACTICE

4.1. Identification of Students

Each Subject Leader will provide subject-specific criteria to be used to identify gifted and talented students within his/her own department. These identification criteria will take into account:

Assessment

- Standardised test scores, such as Cognitive Ability Tests (CATs);
- Teacher observation and assessment within lessons;
- External examination results, e.g. in music;
- Generic checklists used alongside subject-specific criteria to identify thinking skills often apparent in gifted and talented students, regardless of the Academy subject area – see appendix;
- Performances, e.g. in music, drama, PE;
- Exhibitions of work, e.g. in art, DT;
- Portfolios of work from home, Academy or enrichment/able student courses;
- Recommendations from parents or previous teachers;

- The importance of not overlooking students with potentially high ability, who may be under-achieving due to disability (e.g. Asperger's Syndrome, speech and communication disorders, hearing or visual impairment, emotional or behavioural difficulties), or due to a disadvantaged home background where expectations may be low.

4.2. Register of Gifted and Talented Students

The Gifted & Talented Coordinator will collate a central register, highlighting not only student names, but also their strengths and special interests, as well as any parental comments. This register will be readily accessible to staff within the Academy, but also to outside agencies.

4.3. Provision of Gifted and Talented Students

4.3.1. Whole Academy

- A working environment where staff are aware of, and sympathetic to, the emotional, social and intellectual needs of gifted and talented students.
- A positive Academy ethos, where all students are encouraged to express their opinions and learn to recognise and respect differences between each other as individuals.
- Provision of extra-curricular activities, such as regular clubs or timetabled enrichment activities for groups of gifted and talented students.
- Provision of opportunities for gifted and talented students to work with others of a similar ability outside The Bushey Academy.

4.3.2. Within Departments

- Schemes of Work will include tasks and challenges to stimulate gifted and talented students, taking multiple intelligences into consideration.
- Opportunities will be provided for gifted and talented students to work with others of a similar ability.
- The departmental register of gifted and talented students will be reviewed and updated annually.
- There will be opportunities for staff teaching within a department to meet to discuss provision for gifted and talented students in their specific subject areas. This will raise any issues about resources and staff training.

4.3.3. Within the Classroom

- High teacher expectation and praise for achievement.
- Lesson plans which provide planned, appropriate differentiation for gifted and talented students.
- Opportunities for gifted and talented students to follow their own interests and to extend their breadth and depth of subject-specific knowledge (rather than simply accelerating their knowledge to higher National Curriculum levels), both within class lessons and also through research and other tasks to be completed outside of lessons, either by individuals or a group of students with similar ability.
- The use of a variety of teaching and learning styles, together with encouraging gifted and talented students to reflect on their own learning styles.

- Pace of lessons to match speed of individual learners.
- The use of questioning to engage higher level thinking skills.
- Target setting for gifted and talented students, with targets being Specific Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Based.

4.3.4. *At Home*

- Parents will be informed of their son's/daughter's inclusion in any activities for gifted and talented students.

4.4. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

4.4.1. At departmental level, the Subject Leader will:

- use the scrutiny of work to assess and evaluate achievements of gifted and talented students and to set future targets;
- use lesson observation to assess the effectiveness of teaching gifted and talented students;
- use assessment data to measure progress of gifted and talented students;
- question gifted and talented students about their learning as an indicator of how effective the programmes of study have been, and whether they match the preferred learning styles of the students.

4.4.2. At whole Academy level, the Coordinator of gifted and talented students will:

- use scrutiny of work to assess and evaluate achievements of gifted and talented students across a range of subjects, which will indicate whether different departments have similar expectations;
- build up portfolios of work to be used for benchmarking;
- track individual students by student pursuit to assess the 'diet' of gifted and talented students across different subjects;
- be able to identify good practice and arrange for this to be disseminated;
- use assessment data to monitor progress of gifted and talented students across different subject areas and also to compare attainment with other middle schools in Somerset;
- question students about their learning in different subject areas, as an indicator of the effectiveness of the whole Academy curriculum;
- question students as to the quality of their relationships with adults and peers within the Academy;
- ensure appropriate information is transferred when students move schools;
- arrange for parents to meet with appropriate staff to exchange information and to discuss their child's progress.

APPENDIX

GENERIC CHECKLIST

Gifted and talented students will not necessarily share the same talents, but are more likely than most students to:

- remember something previously learned and make use of the information in a new context; explain their understanding of concepts to others in their own words;
- have analytical ability, e.g. understanding how parts relate to the whole, understanding structure, motive and style in literature, able to identify strengths and weaknesses;
- have the ability to synthesise re-forming individual parts to make a new whole, e.g. in designing, composing, creating, constructing, interpreting, developing and improving;
- be able to evaluate, making judgements against criteria and giving valid rationales for their decisions;
- think quickly and accurately;
- work systematically;
- generate creative working solutions;
- have a flexible approach to work;
- communicate their thoughts and ideas well;
- be interested in finding patterns;
- be determined and diligent in seeing tasks which interest them through to the end;
- be particularly creative;
- show great sensitivity or empathy;
- demonstrate some particular physical dexterity or skill;
- make sound judgements;
- be outstanding leaders or team members;
- be fascinated and/or passionate about a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum;

Underachievers who are gifted and talented may not demonstrate many of the above, due to disability or disadvantage. However, they are likely to show some of the following characteristics:

- critical of the Academy and its values;
- abrasively humorous with an ironic perception of other people's weaknesses and motives;
- orally good, while written work may be poor or incomplete;
- not interested in seeking the teacher's approval;
- apparently bored and unmotivated;
- inventive and original, but impatient and reluctant to persevere;
- quick to learn new concepts;
- restless and easily distracted, also the cause of distraction to others;
- friendly with older students or adults, rejecting the peer group;
- able to pose and solve problems, especially if unrelated to school tasks;
- challenging in behaviour, suffering from low self-esteem;
- setting unrealistic goals – too high or too low;
- able to ask provocative, searching questions;
- unwilling to do routine work.