

Harvills Hawthorn More Able, Higher-attaining, Gifted and Talented Policy



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This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children at Harvills Hawthorn Primary School. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff.

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented

Harvills Hawthorn Primary School has been reaccredited by the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) which recognises that we provide a range of experiences for more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children to achieve and exceed their full potential.

Intent

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we value the progress and advancement of the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented pupils, helping them to exceed their age-related expectations. This belief is demonstrated by the school as a whole through our vision “To be the very best that we can be.”

We believe that by encouraging and helping more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children to exceed expectations, we are creating a recipe for success for each child’s future. This encouragement is provided throughout the curriculum, which is deliberately ambitious for all pupils – including those with SEND, and includes enrichment activities where a child may express and improve upon a talent.

Harvills’ agreed definitions

More-able children

- Learners who have the **potential or capacity** for high attainment;
- Learners who **demonstrate high levels of performance** in an academic area;
- Learners who are more-able **relative to their peers** in their own year group and class
- Ability in all areas of the curriculum **or** in a specific subject/curriculum area, including the arts and physical activities.

Higher-attaining children

This is an outcome-driven term. It is a way of identifying learners based purely on their performance. Higher-attaining children are those who are working up to an academic year above their peers in their own year group and class.

Gifted

Gifted children are working at least an academic year above their peers in their own year group and class. These children are working at a standard that is deemed “exceptional”. A gifted child is one who shows exceptional ability in one or more areas such as mathematical, verbal, spatial awareness, musical or artistic ability.

Our principal aims are to:

- Ensure that all staff can successfully identify more-able, higher-attaining, gifted or talented children as early as possible, through an agreed, shared definition of the said terms;
- Ensure that staff challenge and extend the children through the learning that they set them;
- Develop the children’s thinking skills through extended and enriched learning activities and diverse questioning;
- Offer children opportunities to generate their own learning;
- Encourage the children to work independently;
- Develop the specific skills or talents of each child;

- Be concerned not only for children's academic and talented development, but also for their social, moral, spiritual and emotional development.

Implementation

At Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, we pride ourselves on the consistent approach to teaching and learning that can be observed across all phases of school. This is achieved through our commitment to cutting edge, research-based CPD in addition to quality-first teaching on a daily basis. Expectations of staff and pupils are high, resulting in good or outstanding progress in all phases. There is a universal understanding of what great teaching, learning and assessment should entail. These strategies are consistently used throughout school and it is the expectation of leadership that all lessons will include a variety of these to enable learners to reach their full potential. Active learning is essential in all aspects of the lesson. All staff use the same terminology so that learners develop a knowledge and understanding of the different ways they learn.

At Harvills, we believe great teaching, learning and assessment must include the following:

- Understanding the Content
- Creating a Supportive Environment
- Maximising Opportunities to Learn
- Activating Hard Thinking (building ratio)

We are working hard to promote our pupils' English and ensure that they all achieve to the very best of their ability. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. English is fundamental to all subjects. Consequently, we believe that all stakeholders have a role to play in supporting and developing our pupils' English skills to ensure they can communicate effectively in today's society. All children are expected to follow our school's non-negotiables for presentation. This includes a focus on learning to write in the cursive script.

Teachers plan a curriculum that considers the needs of the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children as part of the whole school profile; providing challenges within all lessons, using a variety of teaching styles and learning methods across the entire curriculum. The development of personal skills, such as confidence and resilience, are also included throughout a child's experience at Harvills, both via school values and our curriculum.

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children identification

The highest performing 5-10% of pupils within our school, who achieve high levels of attainment across the curriculum, or in particular skills or aspects of subjects, are identified as our more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children. We do allow more flexibility on the number of talented children on the register, which means that talented children are not excluded simply because the school has "met its quota" so that we can recognise and value all talents within the arts, music and physical activities.

The following areas have been identified as being the main areas of ability and are based on the Howard Gardner intelligences. Category A includes those who are academically gifted and B-E those who are talented.

- A. Intellectual (aspects of English, Maths and Science)
- B. Artistic and Creative (Art, Design, Music and Drama)
- C. Practical (Design and Technology, Mechanical Ingenuity)
- D. Physical (PE, Sports and Dance)
- E. Social (Personal and Interpersonal, Leadership qualities, working with adults)

We use a range of strategies to identify more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children. Some examples of these are teacher assessment, parental suggestions and the pupils themselves identifying their own talents. Outside referrals from experts, subject specialists or other agencies will also be used to inform the register. (See Appendix 1 for aptitudes in English and Mathematics and Appendix 2 for characteristics of G&T learners.)

The identification process is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school. Each child's pre-school record gives details of their achievements and interests in particular areas. Discussions with parents and carers enable us to add further details to these records.

Within the first six weeks of a child joining reception, pupils undergo the Reception Baseline Assessment. This provides information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. Discussions are held with parents regarding their child's baseline assessment information, which is key for planning for individual needs.

As the children progress through the school, regular assessments ensure that they are meeting our expected standard of progress within their personal targets.

The children undertake Statutory Assessment Tests in Year 6. In addition to this, Phonics Screening (Year 1) and the Multiplication Tables Check (Year 4) tests are administered. Teachers also make termly assessments of each child's progress in all subjects of the National Curriculum. Comparisons are made from these tests with a range of national and LA data, in order to ensure that each child is making appropriate progress.

Pupil Tracking

Each teacher regularly reviews the children's progress and inputs this data into our pupil tracking system. Each term, a pupil progress meeting is conducted with individual staff in order to monitor the progress of all pupils within a cohort. More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children are identified during this conversation.

A child who has been identified as more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented will be recorded on the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented register. The area of ability will be recorded and planned for accordingly. After the children have been identified, they are placed onto a whole school register, which is accessible to all staff and monitored termly. We also identify any children who are under achieving, so that they too can reach their full potential, regardless of barriers, which may impact upon their learning. Each child on the register has an individual plan (IEP) specifically written for them with targets to aim towards. Discussions on target setting are held with individual children so that they are fully included in their learning journey and have an amount of autonomy. The individual plans are shared with parents at parents' evenings and a copy is sent home. This promotes a collaborative approach in assisting the children to achieve their goals. Class teachers and the child review the individual plans termly. The plans are updated to reflect this.

Underachieving pupils are those who have the potential to achieve but do not necessarily demonstrate high achievement. We need to ensure that underachieving pupils are included in the identification process and this means having clear criteria against which to identify so that all children have the appropriate level of challenge. (See Appendix 3 for further information.)

Provision

There are various ways of meeting the needs of the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children. These include the following:

- Acceleration – This will be carefully considered to take account of the social development of the pupil and ability across the curriculum
- Extension – This means giving the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children the opportunity to delve more deeply into whatever the topic is under study. All short-term planning should include the extension activities for more-able pupils
- Enrichment – This involves additional activities on the same topic to be set to stretch the children and not just provide more of the same. Enrichment activities are accessible, extendible, not restrictive, enjoyable and involve decision making, speculation, hypothesis, discussion and communication.
- Differentiation – Adaptive teaching should maximise potential, should match aptitude and interest and explore relevant teaching approaches.

Most provision will be through the curriculum with extra-curricular activities being provided, where possible or appropriate, to meet particular needs. Enrichment and extension activities could be provided in the following formats:

- Extra-curricular activities in school
- Visits/trips/ experience days
- Links with other schools
- Links with specialist organisations

Impact

Our more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children enjoy an enriched curriculum that challenges and extends their learning at every opportunity, whilst also giving them the freedom to learn in the style that best suits them. The children are encouraged to be independent learners and to take control of their own challenges. They are always eager to achieve and exceed their current, individual targets and always ready to move on to the next target.

When the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children leave Harvills Hawthorn Primary School, they will be more than ready to progress to the next phase of their learning, confident that they have the skills and independence necessary to exceed expectations placed upon them throughout their lives.

Role of the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children leader

- The leader provides a strategic lead and direction for this area.
- Keep up-to-date with research on teaching and learning strategies for the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children and disseminate to staff and pupils.
- Gather information regarding the identification of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children from a variety of sources.
- Supporting staff in the identification more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children;
- Maintain an overview of the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children students within the school and ensure the register is up to date.
- Ensure all staff have access to the register.
- Collate information about the number of students on the register.
- Provide subject leaders with details of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children in their subject.
- Work co-operatively with the SENCo.
- Providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies for more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.

- Ensure teachers are able to navigate the curriculum and help them to plan lessons.
- Lead by example in the way they teach in their own classroom.
- Coach and mentor colleagues as and when appropriate.
- Teach demonstration lessons when appropriate.
- Observe colleagues providing effective feedback.
- Monitoring the progress of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children through termly discussions with teachers.
- Monitor books/evidence on a regular basis.
- Discuss regularly, with the Head Teacher the progress of the children on the register in the school.
- Prepare, organise and lead INSET, with the support of the Head Teacher.
- Attend INSET for own professional development.
- Audit resources annually to inform purchases required thus ensuring that resources are readily available to support the teaching of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.
- Identify strengths and School Improvement Priorities within this area.
- Liaising with parents, governors and LA officers on issues related to more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.
- Inform parents of any changes.
- Promote and support the emotional well-being of all more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.

The Role of the class teacher

- Fulfil their role in the identification and nomination of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.
- Plan and teach to meet the individual needs of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.
- Evaluate progress termly and review the learning plan termly, updating when necessary.
- Update the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented register.
- Discuss any concerns with the more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented lead.
- Be accessible to parents to discuss pupil's targets and progress.

The Role of the Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and that:

- All required elements of the curriculum, and those subjects which the school chooses to offer, have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual children will be met.
- The amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the curriculum is adequate and is reviewed by the governing board.
- Where appropriate, the individual needs of some pupils are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from all or part of the National Curriculum.
- They manage requests to withdraw children from curriculum subjects, where appropriate.
- The school's procedures for assessment meet all legal requirements.
- The governing board is fully involved in decision-making processes that relate to the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- The governing board is advised on whole-school targets in order to make informed decisions.
- Proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEND and more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.

The Role of the Governing Body

The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The governing board will also ensure that:

- A robust framework is in place for setting curriculum priorities and aspirational targets.
- Enough teaching time is provided for pupils to cover the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements.
- Proper provision is made for pupils with different abilities and needs, including more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.
- The school implements the relevant statutory assessment arrangements.
- It participates actively in decision-making about the breadth and balance of the curriculum.
- It fulfils its role in processes to disapply pupils from all or part of the National Curriculum, where appropriate, and in any subsequent appeals.

Speech, Language and Communication including Collaborative Learning

Beginning in the Early Years and following throughout the whole school, children are actively encouraged to speak, communicate and listen in all areas of the curriculum. Opportunities are given for school, class, small group and individual discussions, expressions of ideas and presentations. Children will be using collaborative learning strategies as part of their everyday learning in mathematics.

Examples of such strategies are:

- Snap 2 – paired talk
- Snowball – group talk
- Thought shower
- Listening triangles
- Envoy
- Rainbow groups
- Jigsaw
- Round Robin

Children will:

- Listen and respond with constructive comments, questions and answers in a variety of speaking and listening activities, developing wide ranging and suitable vocabulary
- Listen to and follow instructions
- Plan and discuss work co-operatively

By the time the children leave Harvills, our aim is for them to have the fluency and confidence to use language to convey information, ideas, comments and personal views in a socially acceptable manner, appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Resources

All staff in school have access to the NACE website where there is a multitude of resources available.

Inclusion

We consider every teacher to be a teacher of every child, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those who are more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented. We have the highest aspirations and expectations for all children to be the very best they can be.

We aim to provide all children, including those with SEND or MAG&T, with a broad, balanced academic and social curriculum, which is accessible and ensures they are fully included in all aspects of school life and feel equally valued and fully part of the school community. Teachers will involve all pupils through carefully planned activities.

Assessment for Learning

As part of the learning process, children will discuss, with their peers and/or with relevant adults, the outcomes of their learning, its merits and the ways in which it can still be improved.

This will be done on a regular basis and will involve:

- Children's conversations to help determine whether success criteria have been met.
- Conversations with teaching staff to help determine whether success criteria have been met.
- Children's written (writing comments in each other's work books) feedback as a result of the conversations.
- Peer and self-marking of work, to agreed success criteria.
- Taking the temperature, Thinking Hats, 2 stars and a wish, WWW / EBW and other self / peer assessment strategies.

All of the above will support and augment the school's formal assessment procedures.

Reporting

Parents will receive copies of their child's individual more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented plan termly. They will be given the opportunity to meet with the class teacher at termly parents' evenings to discuss their child's progress.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring of lessons is undertaken according to the school's monitoring policy. Observations are undertaken in pairs by the subject leader and a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Book Looks take place termly alongside pupil voice. An annual subject self-evaluation form, evaluating strengths and weaknesses in the subject and indicating areas for future development, is provided to the Headteacher. This is reported to the Pupil and Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body.

Appendix 1

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children in English are identified when they:

- demonstrate high levels of fluency and originality in their conversation;
- use research skills effectively to synthesise information;
- enjoy reading and respond to a range of texts at an advanced level;
- use a wide vocabulary and enjoy working with words;
- see issues from a range of perspectives;
- possess a creative and productive mind and use advanced skills when engaged in discussion.

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children in mathematics are identified when they:

- explore a range of strategies for solving a problem;
- are naturally curious when working with numbers and investigating problems;
- see solutions quickly without needing to try a range of options;
- look beyond the question in order to hypothesise and explain;
- work flexibly and establish their own strategies;
- enjoy manipulating numbers in a variety of ways.

Appendix 2

General characteristics of more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children.

The following characteristics (taken from the 1998 Ofsted review of research by Joan Freeman) are not necessarily proof of high ability but they may alert teachers to the need to enquire further into an individual's learning patterns and ability levels.

He or she may:

- be a good reader;
- be very articulate or verbally fluent for their age;
- give quick verbal responses (which can appear cheeky);
- have a wide general knowledge;
- learn quickly;
- be interested in topics which one might associate with an older child;
- communicate well with adults – often better than with their peer group;
- have a range of interests, some of which are almost obsessions;
- show unusual and original responses to problem-solving activities;
- prefer verbal to written activities;
- be logical;
- be self-taught in his/her own interest areas;
- have an ability to work things out in his/her head very quickly;
- have a good memory that s/he can access easily;
- be artistic;
- be musical;
- excel at sport;
- have strong views and opinions;
- have a lively and original imagination/sense of humour;
- be very sensitive and aware;
- focus on his/her own interests rather than on what is being taught;
- be socially adept;
- appear arrogant or socially inept;
- be easily bored by what they perceive as routine tasks;
- show a strong sense of leadership; and/or not necessarily appear to be well-behaved or well-liked by others.

Appendix 3

Underachievement

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented underachievers may tend to:

- have low self-esteem;
- be confused about their development and about why they are behaving as they are;
- manipulate their environment to make themselves feel better;
- tend towards a superior attitude to those around them; and find inadequacy in others, in things, in systems, to excuse their own behaviours.
- Sometimes those with abilities in one or more areas of learning may also suffer from a disability or difficulty in others. This can present a considerable barrier to the achievement of potential, as well as leading to frustration and disaffection.
- Developing strategies and approaches to countering underachievement should be an integral part of the school policy for gifted and talented provision. The key aspects of underachievement that need to be taken into account and considered are:
 - What are the indicators of underachievement?
 - What are the causes of underachievement?
 - What are some ways of countering underachievement?
 - Are there potential causes due to dual or multiple exceptionalities?

Appendix 4

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children dislike:

- Being made to feel 'different'
- Acting as an unpaid teacher
- Too much independent activity – they welcome direct teaching and interaction with the teacher
- Insufficient structure to lessons – they like to know where the lesson is heading
- Their requests for help being ignored
- Over-emphasis on writing – "Writing for the sake of it"
- Dictation
- Time-filling activities such as colouring in
- Low level tasks (e.g. simple recall)
- Teachers assuming that they know what to do
- Teachers who 'go on and on'
- Having to remain silent for long periods (excluding tests, exams etc)
- Teachers who have no sympathy for them when they encounter barriers to learning
- Being told to 'work it out for yourself' when they are genuinely unable to undertake a task
- Lack of variety in homework – always just finishing off what they have begun in class
- Lack of variety in classwork – in the teacher's restricted range of teaching approaches
- Always being given more of the same when they finish work early
- Not being told what the lesson objectives are
- Lockstep teaching
- Having to work at the same pace as everyone else (usually far slower)
- 'waiting around' for the next task/the teacher's attention
- Sexist teachers
- Condescending teachers
- Not being allowed to have an 'off day'
- Not receiving praise or recognition for doing well
- Being seen as a 'trophy' by the school not as a person
- Lack of consistency among teachers
- Unfair awards – lack of differentiation
- Work which is far too hard or far too easy
- Not being given any choice in how to present work
- Being criticised by teachers for not getting 100% all the time
- Working with the same people all the time
- Being left to just 'get on'
- Always having to help people who find the work difficult or who simply don't want to learn
- Constant pressure to do well and be involved in everything

- Unrealistic deadlines
- Repeating work
- Teachers who over explain
- Having to wait until the whole class understands what to do before they can begin work
- Unhelpful marking (e.g. a simple tick or cross or 'good', instead of reasons why something was good or incorrect with suggestions as to how it might be improved).

Appendix 5

More-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children like...

- Variety!
- Real discussion (not just someone talking through the teacher)
- Time limited tasks
- Teachers who treat you as an intellectual equal
- The chance to have FUN in a lesson
- Teachers who get the whole class involved
- Working with different people
- Teachers who set clear targets and explain clearly how they can go about reaching them
- Practical work
- Thinking activities
- Investigations
- Problem solving
- Group work
- Drama and role play in ordinary lessons
- Teachers who 'break up' activities
- Teachers who are consistent
- Alternative forms of recording (e.g. attribute webs, KWL grids, mind maps, mnemonics, concept maps etc)
- Working beyond the syllabus/SOW to consolidate and reinforce learning
- Study skills and revision techniques taught THROUGH subjects not in isolation
- Teachers who enjoy learning themselves
- Teachers who team teach
- Teachers who have a good sense of humour and make learning FUN
- Structure to tasks
- Choosing their own activities sometimes
- Quizzes
- Competitions
- Opportunities to work at their own pace
- Being allowed to have an 'off day'
- Learning from mistakes in a supportive environment
- Being given something different and interesting to do if they finish early
- Opportunities to study something at great depth
- Independent research
- Applying knowledge to real problem events

Appendix 6

What constitutes an effective lesson for more-able, higher-attaining, gifted and talented children?

- My teacher listened to my ideas and used them in the lesson
- We completed a wide variety of tasks
- We played games which helped us understand and remember a challenging topic
- My teacher asked for my opinion
- My teacher treated me as an intellectual equal
- My teacher was aware that I already had an interest in and knew quite a lot about the topic we were studying and set me a different task to the rest of the group
- I was allowed to research the topic in depth
- I worked with resources/equipment that we don't usually work with
- I worked with someone I don't usually work with

- I was encouraged to choose how I presented what I had learned about the topic
- I was encouraged to challenge my teacher
- We had real discussion
- The task(s) we had to do were really challenging
- I made a model
- The task seemed impossible but my teacher, by careful; questioning and encouragement helped me see that it was achievable
- We only wrote things down that were absolutely necessary
- We were given clear targets by the teacher who explained clearly how we might go about reaching them
- I was involved in a role play
- We had a quiz
- I was given something different and interesting to do because I finished early
- We were given a task where we really had to think
- We were given problem solving activities
- The task was open ended
- I was allowed to work at my own pace
- My teacher made the lesson a fun experience
- We were given an interesting homework to do which was based on the lesson

Appendix 7

Less Effective/Less Stimulating Lessons involve.....

- Copying from the board, worksheet or book
- Cutting and sticking masses of information into files/books
- Writing for the sake of writing
- Over explanation by teachers
- Teachers who set a task and then simply leave the class to it
- Covering work / information that students know already
- 'Dead time' – fast workers/early finishers having to sit and wait for others to catch up
- Undifferentiated punishments e.g. the whole class having to stay behind, copy out work or being shouted at when only one or two pupils are off-task, uninterested or disrupting others
- Colouring in
- Low level tasks (e.g. 'filling in the missing word' activities etc.)
- Too much time to complete tasks – students slow their own pace of working to fit the time available
- Lockstep teaching (i.e. every student doing exactly the same task at exactly the same pace)
- Teachers who talk all lesson
- Teachers' lack of sympathy, advice and support when highly able pupils encounter barriers to learning instead of making comments like "you should be able to do that"
- Lack of variety in tasks set – the same thing every lesson (E.g. colouring in, copying notes etc)
- Not being given the bigger picture – studying information in minute detail without seeing the whole first then working back
- Under explanation on the part of teachers – teachers assuming that because they are able, they will automatically know what to do