

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

FOR APPROVAL BY THE GOVERNORS JANUARY 2010.

The Mission of St. Mary's College

“Love God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength and love your neighbour as yourself” (Mk 12:30-31)

St. Mary's RC Sports College exists to help parents and carers to educate young people spiritually, morally, physically and academically as well as possible.

We aim to be a truly Christian community, where our relationships are built on encouragement, concern, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our religious life is rooted in the faith, practice and moral teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each person in our community is specially valued and has an important part to play in making sure that we live out our mission.

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GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

General Rationale

The aim of our school is to meet the needs of all pupils, and in so doing, develop their full potential.

We believe all children, including the more able, are entitled to expect an education which is challenging and appropriate.

St Mary's College is committed to raising standards for all pupils by ensuring that gifted and talented children enjoy a wide range of opportunities to use and develop their exceptional abilities and talents, and are actively encouraged to excel.

Aims

This policy sets out our aims for gifted and talented pupils. They are:

- To ensure access to a distinct teaching and learning programme
- To allow pupils to work at higher cognitive levels
- To provide opportunities to realise and develop specific skills or talents
- To improve motivation and achievement of gifted and talented pupils
- To have a whole school impact on self-esteem and attainment of all pupils by fostering an achievement culture which recognises excellence in a wide variety of areas not solely academic.

Definitions of gifted and talented pupils

This is a complex area and no single simple definition exists. At St Mary's College we have adopted the following definitions:

- Pupils who are truly outstanding
- Pupils who possess a general academic learning ability which is significantly greater than that of most of their peers
- Pupils who show, or have the potential for, advanced ability in more than one curriculum area
- Pupils who possess superior powers of reasoning
- Pupils who have originality and initiative in intellectual and practical work
- Talented pupils who show, or have the potential for, advanced

ability in the arts, sport or creative areas

- Pupils who demonstrate any, or a combination of, the intelligences identified by the Eric Ogilvie model as:

1. Physical talent
2. Visual and performing abilities
3. Outstanding leadership and social awareness
4. Creativity
5. High intelligence

General Overall Approach

At the whole school level, our aim is to create an ethos where it is 'okay to be bright.' We aim to:

- Encourage all pupils to become independent learners.
- Raise awareness of the effects of peer pressure, gender, ethnicity, bilingualism, disability and social circumstances on learning and high achievement.
- Ensure grouping and organisation recognises and accommodates the needs of high achieving pupils.
- Provide a range of whole school opportunities that fall outside normal classroom provision.

Identification and Monitoring

It is recognised that identification needs to be an ongoing process supported by effective record keeping and professional training for staff to sensitise them to latent ability and under-achievement.

A wide range of qualitative and quantitative strategies are used to identify gifted and talented pupils. The identification process is a starting point and its value lies in better provision of learning opportunities for our gifted and talented pupils.

The school gifted and talented register is inclusive and recognises a range of human abilities and talents. The following strategies are used to identify with the understanding that they all have their limitations:

- CATs
- National Curriculum KS2 and KS3 scores
- Internal formative and summative assessments
- General and subject specific checklists
- Teacher nominations

Organisational Responses

To accommodate the needs of highly able pupils, the school will ensure that:

- Consideration is given to appropriate acceleration of learning and examination entry.
- Opportunities are made for working with older pupils in enrichment activities.
- Where appropriate, short-term withdrawal will be offered.
- Provision is made for exceptional pupils, for example, in the deployment of Learning Mentors.

In Class Approaches

The main purpose of identifying gifted and talented pupils is to improve classroom provision.

To ensure effective teaching and learning opportunities are offered, all departments are expected to:

- Develop schemes of work with a differentiated approach to planning. Where attainment exceeds expected levels, staff will draw on materials and strategies from later or higher levels of study.
- Create challenge within their subject.
- Offer enrichment and extension to encourage the expansion of knowledge and skills.
- Differentiate homework for more able pupils.
- Ensure all staff are aware of how more able pupils can be challenged and stimulated within the classroom.

Out of Class

Many talented pupils can be accommodated through the college's programme of sports and after school clubs and activities.

Trips and outings for gifted and talented pupils are also offered when available; outings to several universities are arranged by individual departments to enrich and challenge pupils knowledge and abilities.

Pastoral Care

We recognise that self-esteem and high achievement are closely linked.

Whilst many gifted and talented children are well integrated into the college and wider community, it is clear that pastoral care of able children is as important as care for their intellectual needs.

Effective provision for gifted and talented pupils requires a supportive and informed pastoral system, ensuring that:

- Critical decisions, such as fast-tracking, are taken with the whole person in view.

- There is a co-operative home-school partnership, which genuinely informs and involves parents in the most effective provision for their children.
- Systems are in place for recognising and dealing with underachievement and its causes.
- Success is actively and regularly celebrated through recognition of pupils' achievements across the full spectrum of activities.
- Individual teachers recognise the significance of their relationships with highly able pupils and are sensitive to the distinct needs of gifted children.

Responsibility for co-ordinating and monitoring progress

Previously, provision for gifted and talented pupils is part of the delegated responsibility of a range of personnel. However, with the recent employment of a Gifted and Talented Learning Mentor, all of the monitoring is covered under their job description. Records are kept of any meetings that take place and any major concerns or issues are forwarded straight to the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, who is also a member of the SLT. The register of Gifted and Talented pupils is also reviewed as and when individual subject teachers or Heads of Department identify a new gifted student or query an existing one.

Both the Gifted and Talented Learning Mentor and the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator co-ordinates:

- Departmental provision
- Extra- curricular opportunities
- Identification and monitoring schemes
- An up-dated register of able pupils

Other key personnel are:

- Heads of Department
- Subject link teachers
- SLG links
- Individual teachers.

Process for Review and Development

Regular review and monitoring of all aspects of the Gifted and Talented Policy is needed to ensure its consistent and successful implementation.

- As part of the whole school strategy for developing provision for gifted and talented pupils, the Action Plan identifies milestones to measure progress.
- Gifted and talented provision will need to appear on calendared

meetings. The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator will use those minutes to monitor and review progress against action points contained within the strategy.

- The Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator will provide opportunities for training needs and staff development.
- The Gifted and Talented Policy will be reviewed annually as part of the cycle of school improvement.

Use of Outside Agencies for Training and Development

The colleges recognises the need for on-going training and professional development to make effective provision a reality for gifted and talented pupils. A range of external support and training facilitators will complement the in-school programme such as NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education), LEA specialist Advisory Staff and National Associations for subject areas.