

# **St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School**

## **Policy for Pupils Identified as Very Able.**



### **Mission Statement**

At St Joseph's we welcome all as members of our school family.

We learn and care for each other as brothers and sisters; enriched by the teachings of Jesus.

We encourage Creativity; valuing our unique talents and skills as gifts from God.

Working alongside pupils and parents\*/carers, we can all succeed and realise great things.

Serving the communities within the Parish of St Joseph's and St John the Baptist and beyond, we reach out to all.

We respect each other, our different cultures and faiths celebrating our richness and diversity.

Through worship and prayer we show our love; striving to achieve our very best.

*“Schools exist to help all young people fulfil their potential. They must identify and nurture the talents of their students, so they can go on to achieve the best that they can. To do this, schools must ensure that the education they provide challenges and encourages children at all levels”.*

Sean Harford, Ofsted’s National Director of Schools

At St Joseph’s we are committed to providing an environment which encourages all pupils to maximise their potential. All children have the right to a broad, balanced and relevant education, which provides continuity and progression and takes individual differences into account. We aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our children. The “Very Able” policy, although specifically aimed at the more able is intended to be inclusive in its nature, and is therefore aimed at raising achievement throughout the school, as well as meeting the needs of the most able.

Provision for the “Very Able” pupil is the responsibility of all members of staff at St Joseph’s. By raising the achievement of these pupils, we aim to raise the achievement of all children within the school.

What do we mean by Very Able?

Most “Very Able” pupils are those pupils who achieve, or have the ability to achieve, at a level significantly in advance of the average of their year group. The following areas have been identified as being the main areas of ability:

- Intellectual
- Artistic and Creative (Art, Design, Music or Drama)
- Practical (Design Technology)
- Physical (PE, Sports, Dance)
- Social (Personal and Interpersonal, leadership qualities, working with adults)

Note:

A pupil who is presently not reaching his or her full potential can be also be recognised as “Very Able”.

Very Able children in Language may be 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.
- Develop a deeper understanding in the topics covered; demonstrating the ability to evaluate, critique and argue.

Very Able children in mathematics may be identified when they:

- Explore a range of strategies to solve 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
- Enjoy manipulating numbers in a variety of ways.

- Work confidently on objectives for year groups higher than their own.
- Achieve levels in national assessments above those expected for their year group.

It is worth remembering that most able pupils can be:

- Good all rounders.
- High achievers in one or more areas.
- Of high ability but with low motivation.
- Of good verbal ability but with poor writing skills.
- Very able with short attention span
- Very able with poor social skills
- Keen to disguise their abilities.

### **Identification Strategies**

We use a range of strategies to identify More Able and Very Able children.

The identification process is ongoing and begins when the child joins our school and involves staff, pupils, parents and carers. Data taken into account will include:

- Information from parents and carers.
- Information from previous teachers, pre-school records, external organisation or agency.
- Discussion with pupils
- Ongoing assessment using open/ differentiated tasks.
- Careful record keeping
- Collation of evidence (ie individual pupil's work)
- Identification using tests and assessments.

### **Provision**

We aim to provide each pupil with activities that build and extend upon their existing abilities.

To do this, we first need to know what these abilities are and they will be highlighted within the identification process. Provision for the "Very Able" pupils comes in many forms. Words such as 'extension' and 'enrichment' are among the most familiar. The work of these pupils in our school reflects their needs; to achieve as much of their potential as possible, a broad curriculum and individual support. Any provision Very Able pupils should aim to build on thinking skills, problem solving, questioning, use of resources, creativity and co-operative working – anything but being told. We therefore reinforce the need for these pupils to take risks and dare to be wrong.

We strive to ensure that opportunities for extension and enrichment and encouragement are built into our school environment. We endeavour to:

- Create an ethos where effort is celebrated and all pupils are expected to work hard and aim high.
- Develop a belief in Growth mind-set, where the pupils believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point.
- Create a love of learning, a resilience and perseverance that is essential for great accomplishment.
- Encourage pupils to become independent, active, inquisitive learners.

- Be aware of effects of the dangers of stereotyping and labelling on learning and achievement.

Within the curriculum we use a variety of strategies including:

- Using enjoyable methods and tasks to deliver the curriculum (e.g. innovative ways to deliver speaking and listening)
- Use enrichment days (e.g. art days)
- Recognition of achievement (Child of the week)
- In addition to adequate differentiation, build in extra extension activities, where appropriate across the curriculum.
- Set open tasks to give pupils ownership in a task or activity.
- Varied and flexible pupil groupings sometimes allowing more able pupils to work together, sometimes allowing them to take particular roles in mixed ability groups. Encourage children to evaluate their own work and so become self-critical.
- Encourage children to explain things to each other; an expert in the room.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher is the coordinator for pupils identified as “Very Able” and Mrs Lyndsey Gravenor is the designated Governor. They will meet termly to discuss the school’s approach to meeting the needs of these children.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school’s work, and will keep the governing body informed.

The Coordinator, currently the Headteacher has responsibility,

- For the day-to-day operation of the schools policy for Very Able Pupils;
- Coordinating provision for these pupils;
- Liaising with class teachers; managing Learning Support Assistants;
- Overseeing the records of the children identified as Very Able;
- Contributing to INSET - training of staff;
- Liaising with outside agencies including LA support agencies as necessary.

The class Teacher is responsible for:

- Teaching the range of pupils within their class effectively across the curriculum areas
- Identifying a child’s who may be Very Able and discussing this during pathways meetings
- Implementing special arrangements to meet the child’s needs
- communicating with parents with regards to their child’s progress or any concerns and actions to be taken
- Informing colleagues and those concerned with the child of any information imparted by the parents pertaining to the child’s progress.
- Informing INA’s of any individual programmes implemented.
- Organising and planning INA time in class to support children as necessary.
- Providing extension activity to deepen learning.
- Reinforcing an expectation that all pupils are capable of achieving high standards (Mastery)

The Individual Needs Assistant (INA) is responsible for;

- Liaising with and supporting the class teacher in the implementation of Individual Education Plans
- Recording progress of children to the class teacher.
- Taking part in any training necessary to develop own understanding of working with pupils identified as Very Able.

#### Admission

Admission arrangements and criteria are set out in the schools prospectus. We, as a Catholic school, would aim to admit all children with Special Educational Needs who would benefit from attendance at the school; so far that is reasonably and practical and compatible with the efficient education of other children in the school and use of resources.

#### Identification, Assessment and Provision

At St. Joseph's Catholic School we follow a graduated response that encompasses strategies to support children who have additional needs.

The school maintains a record of all pupils who have been identified as Very Able., and this is regularly reviewed.

Information is gathered from a range of sources in order to identify pupils.

#### Early Identification

The needs of pupils are evaluated through a range of indicators:

- The pupils' performance as monitored by the class teacher through ongoing observation, assessment and target setting.
- Concerns by parents/child and outside agencies and take account of any information that they provide.
- The outcomes from baseline assessments.
- Progress against the objectives specified in the Maths and English National Curriculum Strategy Frameworks.
- Performance against age related expectation within the National Curriculum.
- Standardised screening or assessment.

#### Access to National Curriculum

All children at St. Joseph's Catholic School follow the National Curriculum for their age group. Very Able pupils should, as far as possible, have access to the curriculum for their age group, but will have extension activities and targeted questioning, in order to deepen their thinking and master their skills.

## Monitoring of the SEND policy

Evaluating progress is an integral part of the SEND process

The coordinator checks that all children identified as Very Able and are currently placed on the school's register. This is done through assessment, by regular informal discussions with staff on a day-to-day basis and termly pathway meetings.

The record of needs is updated termly and movement of pupils is tracked by the coordinator, following pathway meetings.

Parents/carers also have a responsibility to communicate effectively with professionals to support their children's education. In working with schools we expect parents to:

- Communicate regularly with their child's school and alert them to any concerns they have about their child's learning or provision
- Fulfil their obligations under home-school agreements which set out expectations of both sides.

This is usually done through Parent consultations (informal or formal)

## Pupil Participation

All children should be involved in making decisions where possible right from the start of their education. The ways in which children are encouraged to participate at Brighton and Hove reflects the child's evolving maturity.

St. Joseph's Catholic School has many opportunities for all children to participate in decision making and taking responsibility, including the school council and classroom responsibilities. All children are encouraged to make choices about targets and next steps through pupil conferencing.

\*Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines 'parent' as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person (having care of a child or young person means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person, irrespective of what their relationship is).