

## THE IONA SCHOOL

### Able, Gifted and Talented policy

(Revised November 2018)

With consideration to the children and families publication “Identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started in identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started 2008”.

DFE publication “Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years”  
The SEND Code of Practice, Part 4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA, as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

#### INTRODUCTION

In keeping with the ethos of the school, which is a Steiner Waldorf primary setting, all teachers aim to nurture each child in becoming a well-rounded individual. In aiming to achieve a balance, we strive to give each child the foundation for reaching their full potential throughout their education and later life and to this end we recognise all children as being gifted and talented in some way.

A fundamental part of nurturing balance is recognising the unique individuality of each pupil and learning to appreciate their strengths, weaknesses, approaches to learning, attitudes and behaviours. At the heart of this lies a close relationship between all teachers and pupils born out of the class teacher remaining with the class for five to six years. Accompanying the children throughout the entire primary phase enables the class teacher to gain a deeper understanding of the wide range of abilities children bring and develop, through a holistic approach to teaching and learning.

Appreciating the child’s strengths holistically involves the recognition of any combination of the following:

- Academic strengths
- Creativity (across varied tasks)
- Artistic flair
- Physical ability
- Emotional intelligence (through understanding, sensitivity and balance)
- Leadership
- Empathy and support for others

Within the context of a whole class certain children will stand out as “able, gifted or talented”.

The DCSF (Department of Children, Schools and Families) defines able, gifted and talented learners as:-

“Those children with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with potential to develop these abilities).”

They can amount to 7 – 10% of the school population.

At the Iona School we recognise that:

**Able Learners** – have the capacity for, or demonstrate high levels of performance in an academic area. Included are those children who display outstanding leadership and/or social skills.

**Gifted Children** – are defined as those with an innate ability, presenting a natural outstanding aptitude or competence for exceptional performance.

**A Talented Pupil** – is one who shows high levels of achievement in a non-academic area, including art, music, sport or the performing arts.

We recognise that the identification of gifted and talented children must be based on ability, not on achievement.

Gifted and talented pupils can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one area
- Of a high ability but of low motivation
- Of good verbal ability but with poor writing skills
- Very able but with a short attention span
- Very able but with poor social skills
- Keen to disguise their skills

To engage the interest of all pupils and to motivate them to engage with all the strengths at their disposal, teaching is approached in a variety of ways.

E.g. Small groups are challenged to complete a particular task enabling each to use their strengths. The support of others helps with motivation, both the socially strong and weak can find their role, the academically strong can record the findings and the verbally strong can report back at the end of the process.

Tasks can be kinaesthetic, artistic, creative and practical in nature.

In individual work there are three basic ways of further meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils:

- 1) **Extension** occurs when pupils are encouraged to develop more sophisticated thinking and reasoning skills.

- 2) **Enrichment** consists of broadening or deepening a pupil's perception and experience of a topic.
- 3) **Acceleration** consists of enabling pupils to access material intended for older pupils.

At the Iona School we make regular use in our differentiation of both the extension and enrichment approaches to keep AGT pupils engaged and help them feel fulfilled in an academic challenge.

However, acceleration is not used in our school except in the development of reading. The content of the Steiner Waldorf curriculum meets the spiritual and psychological developmental needs of the children at each age and stage. The gradual maturation of the child is nurtured and confirmed by this content which build the child's confidence in themselves and the world around. To accelerate learning, for instance in mathematics, would disrupt this process and could cause confusion and loss motivation. It could also undermine the social cohesion of the class.

Opportunities arise throughout the year for all children to demonstrate their abilities and talents.

### **Land days**

Three consecutive days in late June and September are set aside for a variety of group activities on our land.

Each group consists of children from each class through from One to Five/Six.

Working together develops social and leadership skills and gives the children an opportunity to show their strength and tenacity e.g. in mastering a full wheelbarrow.

### **Talent Shows**

**Steiner School Olympics** – held annually for Class 5. Medals are awarded to all participating children in recognition of their own achievements.

### **Role play at Courts of Justice trip**

### **Individual contributions at school festivals**

### **Review date**

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the school manager on an annual basis.

### **Endorsement**

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name: Mr Martin Taylor  
Position: Iona School Trustee  
Signed: 

Date:

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27/11/18

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#### Related policies

- Curriculum policy
- safeguarding
- SEND policy
- behaviour policy
- assessment policy