

AMDG



DONHEAD
Preparatory School

Able, Gifted and Talented Policy

Meeting Learning Needs and Developing the Gifts and Talents of every child at Donhead

This document is inclusive and should be read as encompassing the school policies on working with very able, gifted and talented pupils. It helps the school to achieve its Mission Statement in the following areas:

- *The pursuit of excellence*
- *Welcoming all*
- *Care for the individual*

As far as possible, the curriculum responds to the formation needs of individuals, including extra-curricular provision and the allocation and use of resources. (Jesuit School Vision Statement)

Introduction - *Cura Personalis*

The Headteacher and staff at Donhead are committed to helping all Donhead pupils explore their abilities and talents as individuals, through which they can make their individual contribution to the whole school community. This may be through the wide range of opportunities provided by the academic subjects taught in class, through music, art and drama, or the sports opportunities available to all the children at Donhead. In each of these areas, children are expected to aim for the highest possible level which they can achieve. Not every child will excel in every area, but the achievement of each child is celebrated – for doing their best and trying their hardest.

This Policy is inclusive and sets out the ways in which the school makes provision for the requirements of children who are very able or talented.

1. DEFINITIONS

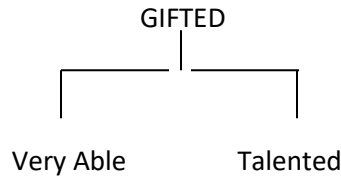
Since Donhead undertakes regular testing of its pupils, some of which is normed across the whole population, agreed general definitions relating to children's ability on the basis of the data collected are set out below for staff and parents.

Pupils who are very able, gifted and talented

Gifted: very occasionally, a pupil has the ability to work at a level far beyond that which is expected for their age group, and they may be described as 'gifted'. Giftedness is a term that needs to be applied very sparingly, as it can raise expectations for a child's performance which may lead to disappointment. It can sometimes be identified in pupils with an exceptional ability.

Very able: a pupil whose cognitive ability places them significantly above the norm of the population in any of the taught areas of the curriculum, and who displays a quick grasp of concepts, lateral and creative thinking, a wide expressive vocabulary and an ability to show persistence in completing tasks set. Donhead children are tested regularly in English and Maths, using nationally normed tests, and children whose Standardised Scores fall at or above 130 (where 100 is the norm for the population) in either of these subjects are identified at Donhead as potentially very able in that subject.

Talented: Talents are generally understood to be practical and skill-based activities, covering areas such as sport, music, art, drama and technology. All children have talents – something which they may discover they are good at and enjoy. Sometimes talents are not recognised, or a child is aware of their own ability, but circumstances or lack of interest mean that these talents are not developed. At Donhead, the range of opportunities provided at school means that all children can discover and use a range of talents, and the school will celebrate them.



2. IDENTIFICATION AND MONITORING

Donhead employs a rigorous approach to assessing, recording and reporting the progress of all its pupils in order to identify children's abilities and monitor their progress towards the targets set in conjunction with their class teacher and assistant headteachers in Progress Meetings. This enables early identification to be made of a child whose ability may be considerably above the average for their peers.

The ability of Year 1 and 2 pupils in English and Maths is identified and progress tracked through the phonics screening and termly standardised assessments, in Maths (PUMA) and Reading Comprehension (PIRA). Standardised assessments are also administered from Year 3 onwards, as well as subject-based school assessments. Scores are entered onto the assessment database each year and monitored to track pupils' progress. The school carries out paper based cognitive testing for pupils in Year 2 and computer based as they enter Year 3, so that a full verbal, quantitative, spatial and non-verbal cognitive profile of potential for learning can be built up for each pupil as he progresses through school. This has value both as an independent indicator of ability, and also to highlight any variations in achievement when viewed alongside scores achieved during the course of the academic year.

Subject teachers identify their most able pupils from assessment data and from the bank of data on cognitive profiles built up through the CAT (Cognitive Abilities) together with the standardised attainment assessments (PUMA PIRA).

Talents are similarly identified and careful records kept. Children with musical talent are identified and assessed very quickly through the information built up by the music teacher on level of skill in a musical instrument and regular reviews of singing progress. Talent in drama is noted by English teachers and every child performs every year. Children have the opportunity to read at year and whole school Masses. Artistic talent and ICT skills are evident in the work undertaken by children and can be extended through the display work constantly being renewed at school. Talent in sport is carefully noted by PE staff, who record the children's development as they progress through school, and coach them accordingly. Carefully selected first teams ensure that children are performing and coached to meet the needs of sports scholarships. Scholarship sessions take place for gifted and talented children in the areas of Art and Music.

IDENTIFICATION: Children who score achieve a standardised score above 130 in CATS, are identified as very able in individual learning areas.

Monitoring and Recording Arrangements

At Donhead the progress of all children is carefully monitored across the Pre-Prep and Prep school.

Monitoring progress and setting targets

All subject teachers keep careful records of their pupils' performance on classroom and homework tasks and mark their work regularly using agreed criteria. This regular feedback enables all pupils to set appropriate targets for their own development.

In addition, the progress of all the children is carefully monitored, using national norms supplied by standardised assessments. These tests provide objective measures for teachers to track the progress of their pupils and identify pupils who are achieving at or beyond their expected level.

There is regular communication with parents through parents' evenings in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms. Parents receive Termly school reports containing academic attainment data, as well as half termly effort grade cards. Parents are also able to make appointments at any time during the school year to meet the Headteacher, class teachers and subject teachers to discuss their child's progress and how to best develop their talents.

3. PROVISION

A range of strategies is currently in place to explore and extend the abilities of all the pupils at Donhead, both within and beyond the curriculum. Reading is given high priority, and all pupils are heard to read regularly, either by class teachers or their Teaching Assistants.

Very able, gifted and talented

All schools are expected to ensure appropriate curriculum provision for all its pupils. This does not mean that more able pupils must be taught a separate body of knowledge or receive additional specialist classes. Within the taught curriculum, it can be achieved through:

- *Depth* – providing increased challenge and more complex tasks
- *Acceleration* – allowing pupils to progress quickly through the learning objective when the lesson is covering something already known to them
- *Breadth* – children provided with opportunities to learn beyond the prescribed curriculum
- *Independence* – a personalised learning agenda for a lesson or sequence of lessons, with opportunities for open-ended projects
- *Reflection* – time to reflect on their own learning to understand how they learn best and how to move their learning forward
- *Higher order thinking skills* – opportunities within the curriculum for *analysing, reasoning and evaluating*

Curriculum enrichment for all Donhead pupils

Donhead is committed to ensuring that all its pupils have the opportunity to succeed as far as they are able, and provides a curriculum which is enriched for all its pupils in the following ways:

In class:

- All classes are a typical maximum size of 22
- Maths is taught in sets from LP1, which enables teachers to work closely with individual children, and allows the groups to work at speeds appropriate to their processing abilities
- An individualised education plan (IEP), in conjunction with the class teacher, subject leader and parents is developed for pupils identified as academically gifted in a certain area. Termly targets are set and reviewed to ensure consistent stretch and challenge as pertain to the child's identified ability.
- Termly assessment enables teachers to have a clear idea of the potential of each pupil

Learning enhancement activities:

- Weekly reasoning test practice

- Focused revision sessions prior to assessments
- Whole-school topic days e.g. Multicultural
- Student Council
- Chess Clubs
- Lego Clubs
- Book week, author visits, story writing competitions
- Environment Week and Gardening Club
- Opportunities for teams to participate in Business Challenges (Elements Enterprise)
- Celebration of individual gifts and talents that are not usually covered by the curriculum. (Assembly presentations and performances)
- Art Club

Sport:

- Team experience for all children
- Regular matches against schools all playing to a very high standard
- Coaching in a range of sports provided by experienced coaches, both within lesson time and beyond school
- Additional Athletic Development club where identified pupils are invited to begin preparation for Sports Scholarship application and screening at Senior Schools
- Termly presentations of sports awards for improvement and achievement

Expressive and Performing Arts:

- Drama productions
- Inter-School Drama Competitions
- School Choirs
- Whole-school and year masses, and the Christmas Carol Service, in which pupils take a full part
- Music concerts to provide a showcase for a wide range of musical talent
- Provision of musical instrument and singing tuition
- Museum and Gallery visits
- Whole-school Art Exhibition
- Visiting Drama Groups
- Educational Workshops
- English Speaking Board

A guide to the characteristics of more able pupils, and those determined to stretch themselves

Bright/ Able Child	More able child – or a child who is determined to stretch themselves
Is interested	Is highly curious
Usually has good ideas	Always has good ideas and sometimes lateral ideas which may appear at first to be silly
Knows most of the answers	Knows most of the answers and starts to ask questions
Answers questions appropriately	Answers questions, but then tends to elaborate
Several repetitions needed for mastery of a skill	Only one or two repetitions needed for mastery
Understands ideas	Constructs abstractions
Enjoys peer company	May prefer company of adults
Grasps meanings	Draws inferences
Copies accurately	Creates original work and designs
Technician/ operator	Creator/ Inventor
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Good at memorising	Good at memorising and making informed guesses
Makes observations when shown how	Keenly observant
Pleased with own work	Highly self-critical and sets exceedingly high standards
Enjoys straightforward sequential problems	Thrives on complexity