

Widford Lodge
PREPARATORY SCHOOL



3b

More able, Gifted & Talented Policy

This policy applies to all staff including those in the EYFS

Reviewed and Approved by the Proprietor: April 2025

Review date: April 2026

Introduction

At Widford Lodge we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all of our children. Teaching and learning is planned in such a way that it enables each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as more able, gifted and talented.

We respect the rights of all children in our school, irrespective of differences in ability, to access a number of areas of learning, and to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding and attitudes that are necessary for their self-fulfilment and eventual development into active and responsible adults.

The mission statement of our school talks of valuing the individuality of all children. The aims of our school make specific reference to teaching and learning that takes into account the needs of all children. They also identify the commitment to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. This policy guides the way in which this happens for our more able, gifted and talented children.

Aims and Objectives

Through this policy we aim to:

- Ensure that we recognise and support the needs of our children
- Enable children to develop their full potential
- Offer children opportunities to generate their own learning
- Ensure that we challenge and extend the children through the work that we set them
- Encourage children to think and work independently using critical thinking skills and to embrace a growth mind-set
- Stimulate children through extra-curricular activities and through curriculum enrichment
- Foster a love of learning and the pursuit of excellence
- Work in partnership with parents and relevant agencies
- Develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences

Definitions

In these guidelines the term 'gifted' refers to a child who has a broad range of achievement at a very high level in one or more subjects. Those children who are gifted often have very well developed learning skills. The term 'talented' refers to a child who excels in one or more specific fields, such as sport, music and drama, but does not perform at a high level across all areas of learning. The term 'more able' refers to a child who achieves, or has the ability to achieve, academic results significantly higher than the average for their age group.

The term metacognition refers to children thinking about thinking, knowing what learning means and taking charge of their learning because of that knowledge. It is a self-evaluation in which children are observers and critics of their own performance in the classroom.

Identification of More able, Gifted and Talented Children

In order to identify more able, gifted and talented children we use a variety of methods. 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. Parents provide valuable information about their child's strengths. These are discussed at parents' evenings and in reports.

Signs of higher ability include, but are not limited to: being well ahead of their peers in the basic skills of speaking, writing and handling numbers; being more able to concentrate for long periods of time on material that interests them; having a retentive memory; thinking quickly and approaching problems flexibly; using abstract ideas at an early age; enjoying complexity; being self-critical and critical of others; having an unusual or highly developed sense of humour; showing exceptional proficiency in creative, artistic, musical or physical activities.

When children start at Widford Lodge, teachers are encouraged to consider the following checklist, which has been discussed and reflected on in staff meetings, to form part of the school's policy and approach to identification.

Widford Lodge More able, Gifted and Talented Identification Checklist

English

Pupils who are gifted in English are likely to show some or all of the following characteristics

- Writing or talking in imaginative and coherent ways
- Elaborating on and organising content to an extent that is exceptional for their age
- Using any suitable opportunities to produce work that is substantial and obviously the product of sustained, well-directed effort
- Involving and keeping the attention of an audience by exploiting the dramatic or humorous potential of ideas or situations in imaginative ways
- Writing with a flair for metaphorical or poetic expression
- Grasping the essence of particular styles and adapting them to their own purposes
- Expressing ideas succinctly and elegantly, in ways that reflect an appreciation of the knowledge and interests of specific audiences
- Engaging seriously and creatively with moral and social themes expressed in literature
- Creating and sustaining accounts and reasoned arguments at a relatively abstract or hypothetical level, in both spoken and written language
- Justifying opinions convincingly, using questions and other forms of enquiry to elicit information and taking up or challenging others' points of view
- Understanding the nature of language and showing a special awareness of features such as rhyme, intonation or accent in spoken language, and the grammatical organisation of written texts
- Showing an interest and enthusiasm for language study, including an awareness of the relationship between the sounds and words of different languages that are not apparent to most of their peers

Mathematics

Pupils show their special talents in mathematics in a range of ways and at varying points in their development. Pupils who are gifted in mathematics are likely to:

- Learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly
- Work systematically and accurately
- Be more analytical
- Think logically and see mathematical relationships
- Make connections between the concepts they have learned
- Identify patterns easily
- Apply their knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts
- Communicate their reasoning and justify their methods
- Ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics
- Take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems
- Sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions
- Be more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry

Science

Pupils who are gifted in science are likely to:

- Be imaginative
- Read widely, particularly science or science fiction
- Have scientific hobbies and/or be members of scientific clubs and societies
- Be extremely interested in finding out more about themselves and things around them
- Enjoy researching obscure facts and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena
- Be more able to sustain their interest and go beyond an obvious answer to underlying mechanisms and greater depth
- Be inquisitive about how things work and why things happen (they may be dissatisfied with simplified explanations and insufficient detail)
- Ask many questions, suggesting that they are willing to hypothesise and speculate
- Use different strategies for finding things out (practical and intellectual) – they may be more able to miss out steps when reasoning the answers to problems
- Think logically, providing plausible explanations for phenomena (they may be methodical in their thinking, but not in their recording)
- Put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions (including their teacher's!)
- Decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables
- Consider alternative suggestions and strategies for investigations
- Analyse data or observations and spot patterns easily
- Strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts, and take pleasure, for example, from reading gauges as accurately as possible (sometimes beyond the accuracy of the instrument)
- Make connections quickly between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers
- Understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence
- Enjoy challenges and problem solving, while often being self-critical

DT

Pupils who are gifted in design and technology are likely to:

- Demonstrate high levels of technological understanding and application
- Display high-quality making and precise practical skills
- Have flashes of inspiration and highly original or innovative ideas
- Demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues
- Be capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products
- Work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience
- Teachers may identify pupils who are gifted in design and technology by: performance at an unusually advanced national curriculum level for their age group; the outcomes of specific tasks; the way pupils respond to questions; the questions that pupils ask themselves
- It is important for teachers to allow time for personal interaction with pupils. By observing the techniques and strategies that pupils use to tackle problems, teachers may pick up on gifts that do not come to light through more formal assessment procedures. It is important to acknowledge that these pupils may wish to hide the extent of their gifts

Computing

Pupils who are gifted in Computing are likely to:

- Demonstrate Computing capability significantly above that expected for their age for example, key stage 2 pupils may be comfortable meeting the demands of the key stage 3 curriculum
- Learn and apply new techniques quickly for example, pupils use shortcut keys for routine tasks effectively and appropriately; they quickly apply techniques for integrating applications such as mail merge and databases
- Use initiative to exploit the potential of more advanced features of Computing tools for example, pupils investigate the HTML source code of a website and apply features such as counters or frames to their own web designs
- Transfer and apply ICT skills and techniques confidently in new contexts for example, having learned about spreadsheet modelling in a mathematical context, they recognise the potential of applying a similar model in a science investigation
- Explore independently beyond the given breadth of a Computing topic for example, they decide independently to validate information they have found from a website; having learned control procedures for a simple traffic light model, they extend their procedure to include control of a pedestrian crossing
- Initiate ideas and solve problems, use ICT effectively and creatively, develop systems that meet personal needs and interests for example, they create an interactive fan club website that sends out a monthly newsletter to electronic subscribers (either working on their own, or collaboratively with peers)

History

Pupils who are gifted in history are likely to show some or all of the following characteristics.

- Show particular skill at inference and deduction when reading texts
- Use subject-specific vocabulary confidently
- Access complex source materials with growing independence
- Have an extensive general knowledge, including a significant amount of historical knowledge

- Develop with ease a chronological framework within which to place existing and new knowledge
- Demonstrate a strong sense of period as a result of study
- Grasp quickly the role of criteria in formulating and articulating a historical explanation or argument
- Understand and apply historical concepts to their study of history
- Appreciate that answers arrived at depend largely on the questions asked
- Recognise how other disciplines can contribute to the study of history and draw readily on what they learn in other subjects to enhance their historical understanding
- Be more able to establish and follow a line of enquiry, identifying and using relevant information;
- Be good at reasoning and problem solving
- Think flexibly, creatively and imaginatively
- Show discrimination when selecting facts and evaluating historical evidence
- Manipulate historical evidence and information well
- Appreciate the nature of historical enquiry
- Be intrigued by the similarities and differences between different people's experiences, times and places and other features of the past
- Thrive on controversy, mystery and problems of evidence

Geography

Pupils who are gifted in geography are likely to:

- Understand concepts clearly so that they can apply this understanding to new situations in order to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions
- Understand geographical ideas and theories, and apply them to real situations
- Communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word, conveying knowledge, ideas and understanding in ways that are appropriate to the task and audience (for example, writing formal letters and reports, producing brochures representing particular groups)
- Learn subject specific vocabulary, use it accurately and are more able to define words
- Reason, argue and think logically, showing an ability to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences
- Identify their own geographical questions and establish sequences of investigation
- Understand, and are more able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships (for example, within and between physical and human environments)
- Enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information and transform relief shown by contour lines into three-dimensional models in their minds
- Be competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required in geography -- aerial photographs, satellite images, maps of different types and scales
- Have well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and the inequalities of life in different places
- Have a wide-ranging general knowledge about the world, with good knowledge of where places are in the world and of topical issues

MFL

Pupils who are gifted in modern foreign languages are likely to:

- Have a strong desire to put language together by themselves and apply principles from what they have learned to new situations, transforming phrases and using them in a different context, often with humour
- Show creativity and imagination when using language so they often extend the boundaries of their knowledge and work beyond what they have learned, not wishing simply to respond and imitate, but to initiate exchanges and to create new language
- Have a natural feel for languages, being willing to take risks and see what works, knowing instinctively what sounds right and what looks right; they are acutely and swiftly aware of the relationship between sound and spelling
- Pick up new language and structures quickly they may have excellent aural and oral skills and may be more able to cope with rapid streams of sound and identify key words at an early stage; they may also display outstanding powers of retention, both immediately and from one lesson to the next
- Make connections and classify words and structures to help them learn more efficiently and being more able to evaluate new language critically, recognising the grammatical function of words
- Seek solutions and ask further questions to test out their theories and seek to solve linguistic problems, sometimes challenging the tasks set and trying to understand their relevance to the language-learning process
- Have an insight into their own learning style and preference, for example they may say how they like to learn vocabulary or structures; they are clear about the type of tasks they like doing; they may show or display an ability to work independently, without supervision, and to make effective use of reference material
- Show an intense interest in the cultural features of the language being studied and use idiom in the language itself and explore the history and the traditions of the language; some pupils may wish to share their knowledge with their peers

Art

Pupils who are talented in art and design are likely to:

- Think and express themselves in creative, original ways and wanting to follow a different plan to the other pupils, challenge the tasks given, or extend the brief in seemingly unrelated or fantastic directions
- Have a strong desire to create in a visual form and driven by ideas, imagination, flights of fancy, humanitarian concerns, humour or personal experience; they persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher.
- Push the boundaries of normal processes to test ideas and solve problems relating to concepts and issues; they explore ways to depict ideas, emotions, feelings and meanings; they take risks without knowing what the outcome will be; they change ideas to take into account new influences or outcomes
- Show a passionate interest in the world of art and design and show an interest in a specific culture (possibly relating to their own cultural background or sense of identity), particular art forms, contemporary culture or youth culture
- Use materials, tools and techniques skilfully and learn new approaches easily.
- They are keen to extend their technical abilities and sometimes get frustrated when other skills do not develop at the same time
- Initiate ideas and define problems; they explore ideas, problems and sources on their own and collaboratively, with a sense of purpose and meaning

- Critically evaluate visual work and other information; they make unusual connections between their own and others' work; they apply ideas to their own work in innovative way
- Exploit the characteristics of materials and processes; they use materials and processes in creative, practical and inventive ways; they explore alternatives and respond to new possibilities and meanings
- Understand that ideas and meanings in their own and others' work can be interpreted in different ways
- They use their knowledge and understanding to extend their own thinking and realise their intentions; they communicate original ideas, insights and views

Music

Pupils who are talented in music are likely to:

- Be captivated by sound and engage fully with music
- Select an instrument with care and then be unwilling to relinquish the instrument.
- Find it difficult not to respond physically to music
- Memorise music quickly without any apparent effort, be more able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after one hearing)
- Sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase -- the music makes sense
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate through music, for example to sing with musical expression and with confidence
- Show strong preferences, single-mindedness and a sustained inner drive to make music

R.E

Pupils who are gifted in R.E. are likely to:

- Show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and ordinary
- Make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices
- Be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed
- Understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts

In more general terms, they may also:

- Have highly-developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research;
- Show quickness of understanding and depth of thought

Sport

Pupils who are talented in Sport are likely to show many or all of the following characteristics in their performance and approach to PE, sport and dance.

- Be confident in themselves and in familiar contexts

- Take risks with ideas and approaches, and be more able to think 'outside the box'
- Show a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance.
- Be intelligent, independent, thoughtful performers, actively forming and adapting strategies, tactics or compositions
- Be more able to reflect on processes and outcomes in order to improve performance, understanding the close and changing relationship between skill, fitness and the tactics or composition of their performance
- Be good decision-makers and more able to take the initiative, often showing high levels of autonomy, independence and leadership
- Be creative, original and adaptable, responding quickly to new challenges and situations, and often finding new and innovative solutions to them
- Have a high degree of control and coordination of their bodies
- Show strong awareness of their body in space
- Combine movements fluently, precisely and accurately in a range of contexts and activities

Some pupils may have unusual abilities in specific aspects of the programme of study or areas of activity, such as:

- Evaluating and improving performance through leadership
- Acquiring, developing and performing advanced skills and techniques
- Conceptual understanding, shown through the sophisticated selection and application of advanced skills, tactics and compositional ideas for their age
- Particularly high levels of fitness for their age, in both specific and general areas
- Specific strengths in general areas, such as games activities or dance activities

Furthermore, tests are rule-of-thumb indicators in some instances (e.g. linguistic and mathematical skills). Children undertake mid and end of year tests annually, and these can give an indication of how well a child is performing.

Evidence from pupils' work or performance gives a good insight into ability. This includes work completed in and out of school.

Observation by teaching staff, learning support assistants, club leaders etc. plays an important role in the identification of more able and gifted and talented children. Staff are encouraged to put forward names throughout the academic year for discussion as to whether the child should be included on the register.

Provision for more able, gifted and talented children

Teachers in our school plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our children. Staff give all our children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do and this is achieved in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning by:

- Promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity
- Offering personalised learning opportunities
- Encouraging independence and self-assessment
- Using Critical Thinking Questions to deepen understanding when marking work

- Provide opportunities for children to use Critical Thinking Questions to give peer assessment
- Using Learning Powers and Metacognition Activities to give children the opportunity to self-evaluate and critique their own work and performance
- Offering extension work in greater depth with increasing complexity, subtlety or abstraction
- Offering enrichment to apply skills and understanding to a wider range of problems
- Provide opportunity for acceleration provided by extending the pitch of learning objectives

We offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children. These activities offer more able, gifted and talented children the opportunity to further extend their learning in a range of activities. Opportunities include a range of sporting, musical, ICT, craft clubs and engineering.

Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in class. This offers teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.

The children also have the chance to experience a range of educational visits and enrichment days that further develop learning.

More able mathematicians in Forms 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend weekly extension groups. In English, more able pupils are offered the opportunity to extend their understanding of text through in depth group discussions. The school has close links with a number of sports clubs outside school, and children showing a talent or interest in a particular area are encouraged to develop their skills further. Pupils showing musical ability have regular opportunities to perform in assemblies and inter-school competitions, as well as joining the school choirs. A one page learning enhancement plan is created and updated by the relevant teacher with support from the More able, Gifted and Talented Leader.

The role of the More able, Gifted and Talented Leader

The More able, Gifted and Talented Leader co-ordinates the provision and practice within the school for these children. The leader's role includes:

- Ensuring that the more able, gifted and talented register is up to date
- Monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken by more able, gifted and talented children across all curriculum areas
- Regularly reviewing the teaching arrangements for more able, gifted and talented children
- Monitoring the progress of more able, gifted and talented children through regular discussions with teachers
- Supporting staff in the identification of more able, gifted and talented children
- Supporting staff with the updating of one page learning enhancement plans for more able, gifted and talented children
- Providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies for more able, gifted and talented children
- Liaising with parents as appropriate and relevant organisations related to more able, gifted and talented children

The leader collects samples of work from more able, gifted and talented children in order to demonstrate the standards that they are achieving. These examples are used to inform the process of identification of more able, gifted and talented children.

School wide responsibilities

Teaching staff at Widford Lodge are mindful of the need to challenge all children in their class and will plan lessons and classroom activities that stimulate and encourage independent learning and a spirit of enquiry. More able, gifted and talented pupils and provision are discussed regularly at staff meeting and subject meetings.

Parents and carers of all school pupils are encouraged to discuss their child's progress (or any matters of concern) with teachers at any time. Parents of more able, gifted and talented children are reminded that this is no less applicable to them than to other parents.

Pupils are encouraged to explore their own capabilities and to discover 'something they are good at'. They should also seek to become better at it. Pupils are encouraged to make the most of the full range of their abilities within the framework of opportunities provided.