



STEP Academy Trust

Gifted and Talented Policy

Date of Policy: July 2015

Review: July 2016

Introduction

The STEP Academy Trust Board of Directors has agreed this Policy and as such, it applies to all Academies within the Trust.

Policy Rationale and Aims

The need for this policy has arisen from the Government's initiative to increase opportunities to excel for those who are considered to be Gifted and Talented within city areas, where for different reasons these children do not always have the same benefits as those in more rural areas.

At The STEP Academy Trust, it is our aim is to ensure that we provide maximum opportunity to every pupil to excel, irrespective of identity, race, cultural tradition or community experience. This will be done in accordance with the Race Relations Act, 2000, where we will tackle racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and promote good race relations between diverse ethnic groups.

Different methods for identifying the Gifted and Talented pupils will be used within each Academy and once identified; we will endeavor to meet their needs by using outside agencies, using individual expertise within the Academy, extra-curricular clubs and by working alongside the schools within the Excellence in Cities cluster.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with our:

- Pupil Premium Policy;
- English as an Additional Language Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- Inclusion Policy;
- Curriculum and Teaching and Learning policies.

Definitions

The terms Gifted and Talented are used to identify in which particular aspect of the Academy curriculum they excel.

A *Gifted* child is one who has abilities in one or more subjects in the statutory Academy curriculum, other than art and design, music and PE.

A *Talented* child is one who has abilities in art and design, music, PE, or in any sports or performing arts such as dance or drama.

An *all-rounder* will be 'Gifted *and* Talented'.

Identification

We will make sure that the full range of the Academy population is considered when identifying Gifted and Talented pupils and those involved in the process will guard against stereotypes in their perceptions of Gifted and Talented pupils. In addition to this we will check that those who are identified as being Gifted and Talented are broadly represented of the pupils as a whole; any significant disparity might suggest that some pupils have been overlooked. If this is the case, the procedures that we have in place will be carefully scrutinised.

Characteristics to look for

Gifted and Talented pupils are a diverse group and their range of attainment will be varied. However, they are more likely than most pupils to:

- Think quickly and accurately;
- Work systematically;
- Generate creative working solutions;
- Work flexibly, processing unfamiliar information and applying knowledge, experience and insight to unfamiliar situations;
- Communicate their thoughts and ideas well;
- Be determined, diligent and interested in uncovering patterns;
- Achieve, or show potential, in a wide range of contexts;
- Be particularly creative;
- Show great sensitivity or empathy;
- Demonstrate particular physical dexterity or skill;
- Make sound judgements;
- Be outstanding leaders or team members;
- Be fascinated by, or passionate about, a particular subject or aspect of the curriculum;
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment across a range of subjects or within a particular subject or aspects of work.

Some Gifted and Talented pupils do well in statutory national curriculum tests. However, as the list above suggests, being Gifted and Talented covers much more than the ability to succeed in tests and examinations; for example, pupils may demonstrate leadership qualities or a capacity for creative thought.

It is important to recognise that not all Gifted and Talented pupils are obvious achievers. Many actually underachieve – their potential is masked by factors such as frustration, low self-esteem, lack of challenge, and low teacher/parent expectations. To enable these pupils to fulfil their potential we will aim to provide opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Who might identify the Gifted and Talented pupil?

- The class teacher;
- Adults other than the class teacher;
- Children;
- Parents.

How can we identify Gifted and Talented pupils?

At STEP Academies we aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum providing pupils with a range of learning opportunities in which they demonstrate their abilities. Teachers will probably become aware of pupils' particular gifts and talents as a result of:

- Talking to parents, carers and peers;
- Observing how pupils approach routine work in class and activities outside the classroom (some children behave quite differently in the two situations);
- Observing them systematically in a range of learning contexts, to identify those who demonstrate social or leadership skills, an aptitude for problem-solving or acute listening skills;
- Observing pupils' responses to their work and talking with them about what they like, dislike, and what enables them to learn best;
- Tracking pupils;
- Observing whether they take the initiative in tackling tasks or adapting conditions to suit circumstances;
- Judging the progress they make in national curriculum subjects and whether they are beyond the level of attainment expected for their age;
- Monitoring pupils' performance in national curriculum and other standardised tests, for example non-verbal reasoning tests.

The aptitudes of pupils for whom English is an additional language are often best recognised by people who can speak to them in their native tongue.

The pupils needs

- Children of high intellectual ability can appear to be well ahead of their chronological age, though social growth does not always keep pace;
- Some children appear to be slightly eccentric;
- Praise is just as important for the Gifted and Talented child as for the other children as there can be a danger that praise is seldom given because the expectations are very high;
- Some pupils may, on occasions, exhibit behaviour which is precocious. This could cause offence without the pupil meaning any harm. It will need to be dealt with in a sensitive and fair way;
- Unexplained underachievement may come as a result of Gifted and Talented pupils feeling threatened by peer pressure not to show their talents or to succeed.

Provision

Developing an effective learning environment

In the classroom

- Have high, realistic expectations;
- Ability grouping for some activities;
- Give some open-ended tasks;
- Have on-going topics to research;
- Provide extension activities which promote thinking of greater depth;
- Review classroom organisation, for example, have interactive displays;
- Build in thinking/reflective time;
- Promote an ethos of risk taking, i.e. 'It's okay to succeed, it's okay to fail';
- 'Welcome' the Gifted and Talented pupil.

When planning

To consider a curriculum which may be:

- differentiated by **input** – tasks may be varied in terms of style and content and some materials may be used by the most Gifted and Talented only;
- Differentiated by **outcome** – this leads to responses at different levels from the same initial stimulus;
- Differentiated by **pace** – Gifted and Talented pupils may need to proceed at a greater speed/level;
- Differentiated by **level** – the National Curriculum requires levels of attainment to be taken into account.

We should provide tasks which target progression and so avoid wasting precious time in giving another page of 'more of the same.'

When assessing

- We recognise that one of the characteristics of Gifted and Talented pupils is that they can sometimes see connections which are not perceived by the great majority of others;
- In promoting work of good presentation, spelling and grammar we will be alert to the possibility of downgrading work of high quality because of superficial appearance. Conversely we will be aware of assessing well presented work which displays only average ability as evidence of high ability.

Out of class activities

We provide opportunities for all pupils to attend extra-curricular clubs outside Academy hours, such as: gymnastics, athletics, choir, art and Design Club and football, etc. In addition to this we also have opportunities for pupils to learn to play an instrument.

We will also continue to develop close links with the BRIT school and Young Enterprise, based at Norbury Manor Secondary School and will also endeavour to establish links with other secondary schools, especially

those involved in the Excellence in Cities Project. We will review Academy visits, spending time with group leaders, particularly those working with the Gifted and Talented pupils.

We will actively look for clubs run in the local community and inform parent of their existence, for example, swimming clubs, gymnastics clubs, choirs. We will support parents by offering suggestions of books, games, visits and activities for their child.

We will be aware of Borough activities for the Gifted and Talented pupils. For example, the mathematics department at the teachers' advisory centre runs courses for the gifted mathematician and his/her teacher.

Organisational Issues

Due to the flexibility of IPC, it is possible to pay particular emphasis on some subjects or approaches in the curriculum for some pupils, for example using wide-ranging projects to develop pupils' creative thinking and confidence in taking initiative. We will take full advantage of this and develop the curriculum according to the children's needs. However, all children will cover the full programme of study by the end of the Key Stage.

It will be the responsibility of the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator to keep the Local Governing Body informed as to what is happening in the Academy in terms of identifications and curriculum for the Gifted and Talented pupils. The Co-ordinator, alongside the class teachers, will keep records of the children providing the Local Governing Body with the data on the progress of Gifted and Talented pupils.

Transfer and Transition

The assessment and recording which takes place ensures that all teachers at the start of each year are informed of:

- the levels of achievements and potential for all the pupils they are going to teach and the next step for learning;
- work already covered.

At the hand over meeting between teachers at the end of the year or when those in Year Six transfer to secondary school the Gifted and Talented children will be identified and the provision which has already been put in place will be shared, alongside:

- their preferred learning styles;
- particular strengths and weaknesses;
- work covered;
- targets for further development.

This information will be passed on through documentation as well as through discussions.

Resources

What are we looking for in specific terms?

This list is not exhaustive but gives important general indicators which are going to help us identify our Gifted and Talented children. The children may exhibit some of the following characteristics:

English

Creative flair

- writing and talking in imaginative and coherent ways;
- elaborating on and organising content to an extent that is exceptional for their age.

Stamina and perseverance

Using any suitable opportunities to produce work that is substantial and obviously the product of sustained, well directed effort.

Communicative skills

- involving and keeping the attention of an audience by exploiting the dramatic or humorous potential or ideas or situations in imaginative ways;

- taking a guiding role in helping a group to achieve its shared goals, while showing sensitivity to the participation of others;
- 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;
- using ICT to research ideas and create new text.

Ability to take on demanding new roles

- researching, comparing and synthesising information from a range of different sources, including ICT;
- engaging seriously and creatively with moral and social theme expressed in literature.

Arguing and reasoning

- creating and sustaining accounts and reasoned arguments at a relatively abstract or hypothetical level, in both spoken and written language;
- grasping the essence of any content and reorganising it in ways that are logical and offer new syntheses or insights;
- justifying opinions convincingly, using questions and other forms of enquiry to elicit information and taking up or challenging others' points of view.

Awareness of language

- 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 words of different languages that are not apparent to most of their peers.

Other pupils may have unusual abilities in specific areas, such as, poetry, drama, or their understanding of the nature and structure of language, whilst being unexceptional in the rest of their English work. In these cases, it may be hard to relate pupils' ability to level descriptions.

Mathematics

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

- learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly;
- be more analytical;
- be able to form generalisations;
- 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;
- ask questions that show clear understanding of, and curiosity about, mathematics;
- be passionate and enthusiastic;
- take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems;
- sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions;
- be a good communicator – verbally and written ;
- be more adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry;
- move from the concrete to the abstract effortlessly;
- be able to quickly apply concepts to real-life situations and in a variety of concepts;
- have good mental agility;
- have a quick recall of number facts which can be applied to problem-solving;
- have quick computation skills;
- have good estimating skills;
- to be able to handle data with ease.

Some pupils who are gifted in mathematics perform at levels that are unusually advanced for their age. Other pupils with exceptional mathematical potential may not demonstrate it in this way, for example, they may have high levels of reasoning but be unable to communicate their ideas well orally or in writing.

Science

- be imaginative;
- read widely, particularly science or science fiction;
- have scientific hobbies and/or 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 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 expressions 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 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 teachers!);
- 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 easily between facts and concepts they have learned, using more extensive vocabulary than their peers;
- think abstractly at an earlier age than usual and understand models and use modelling to explain ideas and observations. For example, Key Stage 3 pupils may be willing to apply abstract ideas in new situations; Key Stage 4 pupils may be able to use higher-order mathematical skills such as proportionality, ratio and equilibrium with some complex abstract ideas when offering explanations;
- understand the concepts of reliability and validity when drawing conclusions from evidence;
- be easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas;
- enjoy challenges and problem solving, while often being self-critical;
- enjoy talking to the teacher about new information or ideas;
- be self-motivated, willingly putting extra time – (but they may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly);
- show intense interest in one particular area of science (such as the Earth and beyond), to the exclusion of other topics;
- be curious;
- take risks;
- draw, analyse and question conclusions;
- reflect on past experiences and plan with these in mind;
- have a good understanding of fair testing and the need for it;
- be able to justify predictions;
- select suitable equipment and use it appropriately;
- be able to use higher order questioning skills, eg will consider the next step from conclusions already drawn;
- question other people's ideas;
- want to extend work and will carry this out independently;
- be able to explain ideas and processes to others and support them in their investigations;
- make links with other curricular areas and apply these to current work;

- draw on mathematics and information technology knowledge in using data handling to interpret, analyse and present information;
- draw on real-life situations;
- grasp a concept and apply to different contexts;
- have good research skills;
- challenge and test new information.

Information Communication Technology

- use it with confidence;
- use it appropriately, eg. in the selecting of and transferring of information;
- draw on and apply cross-curricular knowledge in supporting a task;
- be able to select layouts and modify tasks;
- be able to program sequences to control a desired outcome and use variables to alter this;
- be willing to risk-take and experiment;
- apply knowledge from one piece of technology to another.

They also may, in more specific terms:

- demonstrate ICT capability significantly above that expected for their age;
- learn and apply new ICT techniques quickly, eg. shortcut keys;
- use initiative to exploit the potential of more advanced features of ICT tools;
- transfer and apply ICT skills and techniques confidently in new contexts;
- explore independently beyond the given breadth of an ICT topic;
- initiate ideas and solve problems, use ICT effectively and creatively, develop systems that meet personal needs and interests.

Music

- 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 an apparent effort, be 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;
- recognise pitch;
- have good listening skills;
- be able to apply pitch, duration, texture, shape, dynamics and timbre to their compositions;
- be able to respond to constructive criticism;
- evaluate work;
- keep to the criteria set in their task time;
- be able to harmonise a melody;
- risk take with instruments and sounds;
- choose instruments appropriate to a composition;
- be able to apply knowledge of pitch, duration, texture, shape, volume, dynamics and timbre when discussing a piece of music;
- be able to justify constructive criticism of someone else's work;
- be able to discuss and evaluate music drawing on their existing knowledge and high order questioning skills;
- recognise features of music and interpret these using their imagination;
- be able to graphically notate their compositions and accurately perform them.

Art and Design

- use artistic vocabulary to express own ideas about the artwork of others and of their own;
- show flair;
- be keen to extend skills;
- have good co-ordination skills.
- have good fine motor control skills;
- be good at problem solving;
- be perceptive;
- be able to appreciate the skills of other artists;
- be able to analyse/use the skills of other artists.

They are also likely to:

- think and express themselves in creative, original ways;
- have a strong desire to create in a visual form;
- push the boundaries of normal processes;
- show a passionate interest in the world of art and design;
- use materials, tools and techniques skillfully and learn new approaches easily;
- initiate ideas and define problems;
- critically evaluate visual work and other information;
- exploit the characteristics of materials and processes;
- understand that ideas and meanings in their own and others' work can be interpreted in many ways.

Design and Technology

- 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;
- have an enquiring mind;
- suggest ideas to solve problems;
- demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues;
- be sensitive to aesthetic, social and cultural issues when designing and evaluating;
- be capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products;
- get frustrated when a teacher demands that they follow a rigid design-and-make process;
- organise tasks in a "logical", well-ordered and clear steps;
- select appropriate tools and materials according to their properties;
- think ahead;
- work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience with users' and clients' needs and wants;
- be able to represent ideas in a variety of contexts;
- reflect on and evaluate experiences and take these into account to inform future planning;
- use the process diary as a source of reference;
- think laterally;
- be able to justify actions and materials used;
- have good fine motor skills;
- seemingly without effort produce a finished model.

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;
- evidence of particular aptitudes;
- the way pupils respond to questions;
- the questions that pupils ask themselves.

Geography

- 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;

- communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word;
- reason, argue and think logically, showing an ability to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences;
- enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information;
- be confident and contribute effectively when taking part in less formal teaching situations;
- relate well to other people, showing an ability to lead, manage and influence others, appreciating and understanding others' views, attitudes and feelings;
- have a more highly developed value system than most people their age;
- have a wide ranging general knowledge about the World;
- be able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another;
- be creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solution to a problem.

History

Historical Knowledge

- 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.

Historical Understanding

- 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;
- be able to draw generalisations and conclusions from a range of sources of evidence;
- seek to identify patterns and processes in what they study, while being aware of the provisional nature of knowledge;
- 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 able to identify opinion as opposed to fact and use this appropriately;
- be able to identify cause and analyse the effects of cause and consequence;
- be able to empathise with all sides surrounding an issue.

Enquiry

- be 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;
- question subject matter in a challenging way;
- 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;
- show resourcefulness and determination when pursuing a line of enquiry.

Physical Education

Approach to work:

- be confident in themselves and in familiar contexts;
- take risks with ideas and approaches, and be able to think 'outside the box';
- show a high degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance.

In dance:

- be creative, imaginative and expressive;
- be able to interpret ideas and respond to different stimuli;
- have good non-verbal communication skills;

- have well developed spatial awareness;
- evaluate work, respond to constructive criticism and use this to support future work.

In gymnastics:

- have refined co-ordination skills;
- have good gross motor skills;
- have good hand/eye, foot/eye, hand/foot/eye co-ordination skills;
- have good balancing skills;
- work co-operatively;
- link sequences;
- evaluate work, respond to constructive criticism and use this to support future work.

In outdoor and adventurous activities:

- be a supportive team member;
- be a good communicator;
- have leadership qualities;
- have outstanding problem-solving skills;
- be a logical thinker;
- be skilled in map reading;
- be able to work under pressure.

In swimming:

- be confident;
- have stamina, show endurance and have good breath control;
- possess good concentration;
- be supple and be able to streamline the body;
- show enthusiasm and be more able to where all water sports are concerned;
- have good self-discipline.

In athletics:

Show ability and skill beyond their years in a specific discipline or disciplines.

In games:

- be a good communicator;
- be able to work as a member of a team;
- be skilled at co-operating;
- be quick to react;
- be a logical thinker;
- have good hand/eye, eye/foot, hand/eye/foot co-ordination skills;
- be able to evaluate work and make use of constructive criticism to inform future activities.

Religious Education

- show high levels of insight into, and discernment beyond, the obvious and the ordinary;
- make sense of, and draw meaning from, religious symbols, metaphors, texts and practices
- be able to make connections between different religious practices;
- be able to relate different religious practices to everyday life;
- be sensitive to, or aware of, the numinous or the mystery of life, and have a feeling for how these are explored and expressed;
- be able to raise questions about the meaning of life;
- be able to offer solutions to questions raised;
- understand, apply and transfer ideas and concepts across topics in RE and into other religious and cultural contexts;
- be able to empathise.

In more general terms, they may also:

- have highly developed skills of comprehension, analysis and research;
- show quickness of understanding and depth of thought.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once the Gifted and Talented children have been identified the following will be considered on a daily basis:

- the level of involvement of the gifted and talented pupils;
- the learning of the gifted and talented;
- the appropriateness of the level of challenge;
- the range of teaching methods used;
- the quality and range of resources provided;
- whether questioning encouraged thinking and learning rather than simply recall.

How can we support parents?

We know and recognise the importance of working in close partnership with our parents and their child/children.

The Academy has formal and informal arrangements for meeting with parents to share information about their child's development.

Many able children are well adjusted and have no problems

However, difficulties can arise when:

- children who we feel are more able may display behaviour problems. There may be causes but some problems may come as a result of peer pressure (for example, bullying), insufficient challenge leading to frustration/boredom, pressure from home;
- parents may have a very different perception of their child's ability to our own. The home focus may be solely on rote learning, for example;
- parents may try to live their lives through their child and so impose aspirations which are not shared by the child him/herself;
- parents may have expectations which are too low.

We aim to give support and advice to parents by:

- advising on ways to avoid pressure on the child by encouraging them to play games, make models, explore books;
- informing them about locally based clubs and other groups;
- informing them about places of local interest to visit, such as, theatres, museums, parks, sporting events at Selhurst Park, the National Sports Centre, etc.

Working with parents we aim to:**Listen:**

- for information about home;
- identify parents' needs;
- raise everyone's expectations.

Respond with:

- advice on learning activities and learning experiences;
- an explanation of the Academy policy;
- the sharing of Academy records and evidence of work.

Expect:

Parental response through sharing evidence of their child.

Empathise: to help parents avoid putting undue pressure on their child.