



GIFTED & TALENTED LEARNERS POLICY

Updated September 2021
Approved by the Principal

1. Gifted and Talented Learners Rationale

- 1.1 At Big Creative Academy, those who are identified as being gifted or talented will be known as 'the most able'. The Academy recognises that there are able, gifted and talented learners with the potential for higher-level performance across a range of abilities in curricular, creative, artistic, physical and leadership contexts and in the processing of ideas and information.
- 1.2 As well as the most gifted learners at the Academy, who will be registered in accordance with identification criteria established below, we recognise that within every cohort of students there will be the most able who need to be challenged appropriately.
- 1.3 A policy for the most able pupils will assist us in providing the best possible education for all pupils in the Academy community. We recognise that our most able students have particular needs, which we should meet if they are to realise their potential. A consistent and co-ordinated Gifted and Talented Learners Policy will have the effect of raising standards of teaching and learning in all areas and for all pupils.

2. How the Policy for Gifted and Talented Relates to the Academy's Mission, Vision and Values

- 2.1 Big Creative Academy's philosophy arises from a firm belief in the individuality and the emotional well-being of all students. Their strengths and weaknesses are individual and we celebrate this diversity. We aim to identify specific talents and areas for development in all aspects of Academy life and respond accordingly to the needs of the children. We therefore expect staff to know their pupils' individual learning styles and abilities, in order to discover and promote their unique talents.
- 2.2 The aims of the Gifted and Talented Learners Policy are:
 - to ensure that all students receive the education appropriate to their needs
 - to provide a focus for teaching and learning which will have a positive impact on the curriculum as a whole
 - to have an impact on self-esteem and attainment for all pupils by fostering an achievement culture
 - to enable students to work at higher cognitive abilities
 - to provide opportunities to develop specific skills or talents
 - to improve motivation and achievement of gifted and talented students

3. Key staff

- 3.1 Every tutor plays a central role in the effective provision for the most able pupils. Specifically, the Wellbeing Lead, mentors, support tutors should advise staff on matters related to learners identified as able, gifted and talented. Further support is available from Curriculum Leads, Curriculum Managers the SENCO, and student services who will provide resources for CPD and the whole senior management team is committed to providing the environment in which this policy can be successful.
- 3.2 The Governing Body of the Academy has an interest in and supports the ethos of this policy. Advice is sought from and feedback provided to the chair of the Learner Experience Committee.

4. Identification and Definitions

- 4.1 A register of gifted and talented students will be maintained by the Student Services Manager and both hard copies and electronic version made readily available to staff. A learner may be gifted or talented in many fields or in one area only. Signs of exceptional ability should be looked for, identified and addressed appropriately in the same way as signs of specific learning difficulties.
- 4.2 In drawing up the register of gifted and talented learners the following is considered:
- Identification should be inclusive rather than exclusive, but students should not be registered without clear evidence of ability.
 - Addition to the register should be encouraged, but deregistration should be avoided.
 - The target group should be wide and varied.
 - Ability is longitudinal – people develop at different rates.
 - Staff must retain an open mind as to who are the gifted and talented.

The process for identifying gifted and talented students is set out at Appendix A.

5. Definitions and Strategies for Identification

5.1 The following strategies are used to identify learners for inclusion on the Gifted and Talented Register:

- Learners performing ahead of their year group or in the top 10% nationally at secondary school.
- Learners of observably high intelligence and/or achieving high scores in nationally standardised tests or examinations.
- Learners who are exhibiting behaviour traits for which a more challenging approach is effective
- Learners for whom parents and teachers have recognised a particular gift or talent which could include physical talent, mechanical ingenuity, ability in expressive, visual and performing arts, outstanding leadership and social awareness and creativity.
- Learners whose achievements have been acknowledged outside of the Academy
- Teacher intuition
- Educational Psychologists Reports
- Members of professional or semi-professional sports teams/clubs, recipients of Grade 8 music or Grade 6 music with distinction awards, actors who gain roles in major productions are identified as exceptionally gifted.

6. Development of the Gifted and Talented

6.1 The Academy approach to our most able students is suitable differentiation;

- in lessons
- through assessment feedback
- through discrete enrichment
- in provision of resources

6.2 Other forms of support include;

- providing a setting where appropriate stretching targets supported through tutorial advice and guidance, parental involvement encouraging a partnership approach
- a wide range of extra and cross-curricular programmes,
- mentoring programme

7. Achievements Outside of Big Creative Academy

7.1 Big Creative Academy seeks to support activities and achievement outside of the Academy by celebrating awards in Academy activities, allowing pre-agreed non-attendance of classes in order to pursue a related activity and being flexible about attendance when pupils are given opportunities to develop their talents e.g. film roles.

7.2 The Academy Careers and Progression support delivered through students services and tutorial programmes, ensures that able, gifted and talented learners make a satisfactory transition to the next phase of education or the world of work.

7.3 The careers lead will encourage able, gifted and talented learners, supported by staff, to consider university visits and applications and provide the necessary advice and encouragement through one to one support and coaching workshops.

8. Targets

8.1 Targets are set for able, gifted and talented learners, as with all learners, at the end of written work, in oral feedback with teachers and tutors and on individual learning reports. In addition, able, gifted and talented learners should aim to sustain their high levels of achievement, measured against national criteria. ILP health checks and reviews of assessments will monitor teachers' feedback. Learners who are exceptionally gifted, will also have an individual action plans written by Curriculum Leads. Targets are monitored by teachers and tutors and progress is reported to the senior management team.

9. Range of Teaching and Learning Styles

9.1 The needs of the more able learner include:

- Space to make individual contributions from open-ended situations;
- The opportunity to take risks in an organised way with the facility to fail without threat;
- Contact with like-minded people, either peers or adults;
- A fair proportion of teachers' time but deployed differently than for other learners;
- A good balance of working with urgency and pace, and time to reflect;
- Question and answer sessions that play to the higher-order thinking skills;
- Only as much instruction as is needed, thus allowing the able to interpret what is required for themselves;
- Opportunities to develop further work;

- An environment in which alternative methods and alternative answers are encouraged;
- Work set in such a way that creativity and imagination are involved extensively;
- An appreciation that ability is not always matched by social and emotional development;
- A variety of teaching styles to accommodate the individual needs of different pupils.

9.2 The curriculum: in-class approach:

- enrichment/extension/differentiation of classwork and homework
- a greater emphasis on higher order thinking skills;
- varied and flexible pupils groupings, sometimes allowing able pupils to work together;
- encouraging pupils to become 'independent learners';
- challenge within subject areas;
- short, medium and long term planning to reflect the needs of the most able pupils.

10. Out of class activities

10.1 The Academy will provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities including:

- enrichment activities and visits;
- school clubs;
- musical, drama and sporting opportunities;
- competitions;
- holiday projects;
- learning mentors;

11. Strategies for Provision

11.1 Able, gifted and talented learners are often more flexible in their approach to learning. Approaches recommended include: a faster pace, more open questions, opportunities to shine in areas that suit individual talents e.g. artwork, presentations, debates, independent research, exploratory work and problem solving.

11.2 Teaching and learning is monitored and observed to ensure that it meets the needs of able, gifted and talented learners by observation of lessons, scrutiny of schemes of work and monitoring of learner's written work by Curriculum Managers. The outcomes and effectiveness will be reported back to the senior management team and the annual self-assessment report.

12. Identification of Underachievement

12.1 The achievement of groups and individuals is monitored by Curriculum Leads, overseen by Curriculum Managers and reported annually. The MIS system is used to help track students and the curriculum areas and identify underachievement by groups and individuals. Students' ILP files will be scrutinised regularly by Curriculum Leads and termly by the Vice Principal of Curriculum.

12.2 No data tracking should replace teacher observation and awareness of students' individual needs which should be used to monitor performance on a daily basis.

12.3 The gifted learner might downgrade his or her effort if under-stimulated. The teachers' expectations and strategies for stimulation are the key to successful development and the realisation of potential.

12.4 Underachievement of individual learners is identified by the tracking of progress of grades and the ILP targets. Cause for concern reports are to be used to report to Director of Curriculum. Strategies such as an individual education plan, report card, extra meetings with the tutor, Course Leads and the Director of Curriculum and contact with parents will be used where concerns are raised.

13. Commitment to Improve the Skills of All Staff at Big Creative Academy

13.1 There will be regular CPD days for all staff at the Academy including differentiating learning styles for gifted and talented learners. The Director of Curriculum will work closely with Course Leads to identify CPD opportunities for staff in relation to able, gifted and talented learners.

14. Provision for Exceptionally Able, Gifted and Talented Pupils

14.1 All teachers are obliged to provide good differentiation within lessons. Staff need to think about the learner as an individual with specific individual needs and to provide individually tailored work.

14.2 It is not acceptable to set class or group work and accept the pupils' excellent, good, average or poor results. Challenges must be set according to the child's ability. The responsibility for planning for and providing challenges to stimulate the gifted or talented child rests with the individual teacher. Individual teaching staff must make provision for the gifted or talented child in their individual lesson plans, their half termly and their long term planning. Differentiation must be by design as well as by outcome.

15. Parental Involvement

15.1 Parents will be asked to nominate learners for inclusion in the gifted and talented register by letter from the Director of Curriculum. If any such nominations are received, Course Leads will seek evidence from parents to support the application and consider the issue. The decision to place a learner on the register in such circumstances will be made by the Director of Curriculum.

15.2 Parents will be advised of the Academy's policy towards able, gifted and talented learners and told when their children have been so identified.

15.3 Parents will be involved in discussions of their children's progress. Parents know the key personnel involved with able, gifted and talented pupils from the Academy website and from letters home.

APPENDIX A: GIFTED & TALENTED PROCESS

