



HIGH ACHIEVERS POLICY

This policy covers all pupils including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

At St David's, we recognise that all pupils are individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents and so we aim to provide a curriculum that is appropriate to the needs and abilities of all our pupils. Our teaching and learning is planned in such a way that we enable each pupil to reach their highest level of personal achievement.

Through this policy, we aim to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of all pupils who have been identified as High Achievers by:

- Making provision for a small number of High Achievers whilst also providing for a much larger group of more able and talented pupils within our school
- Maximising the achievement and developing the skills and talents of every child
- Providing additional enrichment activities for High Achievers
- Encouraging pupils to have a desire for learning, an ownership of their learning and a reflective learning outlook
- Encouraging confidence and the skill of independent thinking and exploration. Applying these thinking skills to the wider world and analysing/developing them further
- Providing a rich, challenging and differentiated curriculum in which pupils can work at their own level and pace
- Providing opportunities for pupils to develop specific skills or talents in areas which they demonstrate flair
- Offering support and care for the whole child, socially, emotionally and intellectually

Definitions

The term 'High Achievers' refers to a pupil who has a broad range of achievement at a very high level. These pupils often have very well developed academic and learning skills. It can also refer to a pupil who excels in one or more specific fields, such as sport or music or writing, but who does not necessarily perform at a high level across other areas of learning.

Each child is unique and any single definition is likely to be misleading. This policy deals, in general terms, with:

- Learners who have the **potential or capacity** for high attainment;
- Learners who **demonstrate high levels of performance** in an academic area;
- Learners who are more able **relative to their peers** in their own year group, class and school;
- Learners who demonstrate ability in all areas of the curriculum **or** in a specific subject/curriculum area, including the arts and physical activities.

(Definitions taken from NACE, 2021)

Within any class or group situation there are a group of pupils who are working within the top ability group. We define these pupils as 'more able.' These children perform particularly well in class assessments or show a particular flair in one or more subject areas. However, at the moment their attainment is within the realms of the ability range one would expect within any classroom.

Within the class there may be some children working in the more able group who need more challenges and exceed expectations. At St David's School we define such children as High Achievers - children who show, or have the potential of showing, an exceptional level of ability in one or more areas of the curriculum. We recognise that High Achievers are not just more able – hence our High Achievers register. As a guide, pupils performing two years ahead of where they are expected to be at that point in an academic year, and have done so consistently for a term and half, will be classed as High Achievers. Children placed on the High Achievers register show exceptional ability plus creativity, originality and curiosity, as well as a personal commitment to an

area within which they excel. They demonstrate a significantly higher level of ability than most pupils of the same age, which may encompass one or more areas of the curriculum:

- Physical talent
- Artistic talent
- Mechanical ingenuity
- Leadership
- High intelligence
- Creativity

(Eric Ogilvie 1973)

It is worth remembering that our 'High Achievers' can be:

- Good all-rounders
- High achievers in one or more areas
- Of high ability whilst displaying low motivation
- Of good verbal ability with poor writing skills
- Very able with short attention span
- Very able with poor social skills
- Keen to disguise their abilities

(Deborah Eyre 1993)

Identification and Review of High Achievers

We choose to use a range of methods to identify our High Achievers across all areas of learning within and beyond school. Some children display signs of high ability at an early age. However, since a pupil's level of ability is not fixed and may develop significantly over time, the stage at which high potential is demonstrated will vary from one child to another and from one year to the next. Progress in core areas of Maths and English as well as CATs (Cognitive Abilities Tests) are reviewed regularly by class teachers and the Assistant Heads.

Teacher observation and informal assessment play an essential part in recognising high potential, particularly in the case of very young children. Therefore teacher assessment (both formal and informal) is key to identifying High Achievers. With this in mind the forms for identification and nomination of high achieving pupils rely heavily on a teacher's recommendation as well as more obvious quantitative testing. As a staff we have devised a source of identification prompts. We are also mindful that pupils may be 'able but underachieving'. As ability is evenly distributed throughout the population, the school would expect in an average year that the school's High Achievers' population should be broadly representative of the whole school population in terms of gender, ethnic and socio-economic background.

Identifying three or more of the criteria listed below should indicate to a teacher that the pupil being considered may be a high achiever. The pupil's name should then be passed to the High Achievers Coordinator or SLT together with any supporting evidence.

- Demonstrate a high level of originality in thinking
- Demonstrate a sophisticated use of language
- Show an advanced level of responses to a range of sources of information
- Able to see more than one solution to a given problem
- Able to use research effectively to synthesise information
- Intuitively jump steps when problem solving
- May show signs of dissatisfaction with routine tasks
- Show exceptional performance across the whole range of school examinations and GL Assessment standardised tests
- Sometimes show a preference for working alone
- Sometimes be uncooperative in a group situation
- Sometimes be seen by peers to be natural leaders
- Sometimes be seen by peers to be sources of information or guidance

The High Achievers register is updated annually (Forms 1-6 only). During the second half of the Autumn term of each academic year staff are asked to review the lists of their High Achievers for each year group. At this point the following options are possible:

- Pupils currently on the High Achievers register remain on the register
- Pupils who have been identified as High Achievers could be added to the register

- Pupils could be removed from the High Achievers register if they no longer meet the criteria.

It is the responsibility of the High Achievers Coordinator to monitor this policy, support staff with identification of pupils, compile and maintain an up to date register, monitor teaching arrangements for these pupils and coordinate any extra-curricular provision for pupils on the register. All nominations are approved by the Senior Leadership Team and the Governor responsible for High Achievers.

Teaching and Learning Provision

At St David's we take a whole school approach through assessing, planning, delivering, reviewing and recording of information, to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. In class, pupils may be provided for in the following ways:

- Planning a differentiated curriculum with a balance of whole class, group and individual teaching
- Differentiating through pace, task, dialogue, support, outcome, resource, content and/or responsibility
- Restructuring class organisation or pupil grouping, e.g. setting
- Providing adult support to develop skills and talents
- Planning a variety of extension and enrichment activities within class
- Providing opportunities for pupils to work with other pupils of similar ability within a mixed age group.
- Problem solving and investigation to develop reasoning and thinking skills
- Setting open-ended questions and tasks
- Introducing elements of competition within and outside peer group
- Competition against self through target setting
- Opportunities for creative and productive thinking

Additionally, we offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our pupils, some are specifically for High Achievers and are by invitation only. These activities provide high achieving pupils with the opportunity to further extend their learning in a range of subjects. Currently these opportunities include; HA Art, HA writing group, HA Maths club, Chamber choir, various sports teams and competitive individual sports, such as swimming and gymnastics,

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following related policies:

Assessment, Recording & Reporting
Curriculum
Equality
Handwriting and Presentation
Homework
Record Keeping
SEND

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