

XL@Cwmtawe

More Able and Talented Policy

Context

'Ability and talent can manifest itself in many ways, e.g. academic, practical, creative and social fields of human activity. The needs of more able and talented pupils cannot be separated from the move to raise standards of all pupils. Research shows that schools that focus on the needs of more able and talented pupils improve the quality of learning and raise standards of achievement for all pupils.'
Meeting the Challenge. WAG, May 2008

Rationale

At Cwmtawe learners have the opportunity to demonstrate and celebrate their talents, whilst at the same time being supported, challenged and extended further. We believe in creating an inclusive learning community in which children of all abilities can maximise their potential. We are committed to helping all our learners to develop their personalities, skills and abilities, both intellectually and socially. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each learner to reach for the highest level of personal achievement.

Definition

We recognise that more able and talented learners may be 'high flyers', 'coasters', underachievers or disaffected.

More Able and Talented (MAT) learners may be more able and talented in diverse fields e.g. academic, creative, sporting, social etc.

More Able learners would demonstrate a higher academic ability than average and may require differentiated tasks and opportunities to learn through challenges.

Talented learners demonstrate innate talent or skill in creative or sporting fields.

Ability is longitudinal and can be taught, so the group is likely to increase over time. While some identified at an earlier stage in their education might not demonstrate these characteristics at a later stage. *"Research has shown that high ability and talent are a developmental phenomena, which can rise and fall over time."* (WAG, 2008)

Aims

- Develop a curriculum that extends and enriches the learning experiences of MAT learners.
- Provide teaching which makes learning challenging and enjoyable.
- Encourage learners to think and work independently.
- Offer learners opportunities to generate their own learning.
- Employ a wide variety of methods of recognising potential.
- Stimulate learners through extra curricular activities.
- Extend the curriculum for all learners by realising the needs of the more able.

Objectives

- Develop a whole school approach to meet the needs of MAT learners.
- Identify and create a database of MAT learners.
- Ensure effective monitoring and evaluation systems are in place.
- Work with feeder primary schools to aid early identification.
- Identify and highlight areas of good practice within subjects.

Identification Strategies

It is not intended to define a learner as MAT based on the results of a single strategy, but rather, from a combination of the following:

Transition information from primary feeder schools: Data relating to individual attainment and aptitude is collated and analysed at KS2/3 transition. Discussions with parents/carers enable us to add further details.

Standardised Test Data: Learners undertake baseline assessment within the first half-term of joining Cwmtawe. The tests are CAT, Suffolk Reading Scale and the Hodder Spelling Test. This provides information about their developing skills and aptitudes across several areas of learning. We use this information when planning for individual needs and in setting target grades.

XL@Cwmtawe Performance Reviews: Using the aspirational target grades all learners are assessed in each subject up to three times a year. The data generated is used to track and monitor the progress of those already identified as MAT; and support the identification of other learners who demonstrate particular skills or aptitudes in subject areas.

End of KS3 results: Teachers undertake regular assessments in all subjects and report an end of KS Level. This data is also used to monitor the progress, and support the development of, MAT learners.

Subject nomination: Faculties/Departments will use subject specific criteria, set out in departmental handbooks, to identify more MAT learners.

Roles and Responsibilities

We recognise that the success of this policy will be determined by working in partnership:

Learners: We aim to provide a stimulating learning environment for all learners and this includes MAT. All learners are encouraged to take advantage of the extra learning opportunities available at Cwmtawe.

Parents/Carers: Will be informed of target grades and provided with feedback via XL@Cwmtawe reviews, reports and parents' evenings. They are encouraged to take responsibility for supporting their child's learning outside of school.

Key Stage Co-ordinators will:

- Link with primary schools to ensure effective transition of MAT learners.
- Liaise with subject leaders/class teachers to identify and support MAT learners.
- Identify, track and monitor a register of MAT learners.
- Identify existing good practice and share ideas.
- Develop their own expertise and arrange professional development for others.
- Give advice and guidance on extending opportunities.
- Liaise with Parents/Carers, outside agencies and the LA.
- Provide information about MAT learners to colleges at post 16.
- Report to the Governing Body.

Heads of Department/Subject Leaders will:

- Develop criteria to identify MAT learners.
- Nominate a teacher with responsibility for the early identification of MAT learners in their respective departments.

Teachers will:

- Use a variety of teaching strategies in order to meet the needs of MAT learners.
- Ensure a stimulating environment and ethos of high expectation.

Provision

The needs of MAT learners are managed within Cwmtawe's teaching bands. However, there will be times when it will be appropriate for children to work with older children through curricular activities, visits and early access to examinations.

Teaching and Learning

Enrichment and extension work is provided by all teachers in all classes as part of normal differentiated provision. Other strategies include:

- Broad ability classes.
- Varying groups to suit tasks.
- Setting where appropriate.
- Working with older learners for some subjects.
- Learner initiated opportunities.
- Differentiated teacher questioning.
- Targeted use of LSAs.
- Adopting a problem solving approach.
- Adopting a skills based approach.
- Awareness of learning styles.
- Special tasks of responsibility.
- Visits by experts, outside agencies and other schools.
- Use of MAT learners as peer mentors and buddy readers.
- Acknowledging success through displays, rewards, letters, school website and presentation evening.
- MAT learners share their expertise and skills, supporting others within and outside the classroom.
- Subject specific 'Skills Days'.
- Regular homework activities linked to work undertaken in classes.

Out of Hours Learning

- KS4 revision sessions after school, lunch times and during exams enable learners to access personalised support; and MAT learners to access higher grades.
- KS4 lunchtime extension classes in practical subjects.

Extra-Curricular

- These include a range of clubs across the curriculum such as sport, music, drama, languages and an Environment Club.
- PSHE programme also provides opportunities for all learners to engage in the School Council, School Nutrition Action Group and Credit Union.
- A range of educational visits that further enrich and develop learning.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The performance of MAT learners will be tracked and reviewed regularly through XL@Cwmtawe.
- MAT lists will be regularly monitored and reviewed.
- XL Mentors and subject teachers will support more able and talented learners who may be 'coasting'.

Further Reading

Meeting the Challenge. WAG (2008)

A Curriculum of Opportunity: Potential into Performance. ACCAC (2003)

Useful Websites

www.nace.co.uk/nace/cymru

www.creativeeducation.co.uk