



High Learning Potential Policy

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Introduction

Steiner Waldorf schools work to give their pupils the possibility to form an inner connection with their learning, so that learning comes from an inner motivation. To reach this goal two basic principles direct the teaching and learning. The first principle focuses on selecting the right subject-material to teach according to the pupils' phase of development. The second principle incorporates an understanding that there are different ways of learning and different pupils may need different ways of teaching. Different pupils learn at different tempos and via different modes. At St Paul's, every pupil is valued as an individual and has a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and abilities, gifts and talents. The school will ensure that every child is considered irrespective of race, disability, religion or belief.

We work together to present all pupils with work that challenges, nourishes and interests them, in an environment that strives for educational quality. We support all pupils as they work to realise their potential in keeping with their own abilities which may include gifts and talents in many different modes, activities and subject-areas.

Aims

- Maintain an ethos where all abilities and talents, not just academic ones, are recognised and celebrated.
- To identify pupils with high learning potential as early as possible
- Encourage all pupils to be independent learners.
- Be aware of the effects of ethnicity, bilingualism, gender and social circumstances including "Looked After Children" (LAC) have on learning and achievement.
- Offer a range of extra-curricular activities and clubs.
- Provide work at an appropriate level.
- Provide opportunities for all pupils to work with peers of similar abilities.

Definition

High learning potential describes children

- with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities).
- who have an exceptional ability to excel academically in one or more subjects such as English, Drama, French.
- who have the ability to excel in practical skills such as sport, leadership or artistic performance.

Identification of children with high learning potential

Identification of pupils with high learning potential is a continuous, whole-school process that needs to be managed with care. We seek to ensure that the identification process is fair, transparent, and flexible so that it does not discriminate. In identifying pupils with particular gifts and talents we make use of both quantitative and qualitative assessment, including prior attainment and rate of progress. Specific procedures within subjects will vary but may include the following:

- Teacher observation and recommendation
- Assessment results including teachers' reports and WRAT scores
- Parental nomination

- Specialist teacher identification
- Self-nomination

It is important to remember that pupils with high learning potential might demonstrate one or several of the following:

- High in many areas ('good all-rounders')
- High attainment in one area but low in another e.g.; good verbal ability but poor writing skills
- Of high ability but with low motivation/ short attention span /social skills
- Low attainment but high potential
- Keen to disguise their abilities

In identifying pupils, we are aware that some learners may be intellectually able but also appear on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register for behavioural, literacy or physical difficulties. We also consider factors other than attainment in identification, keeping in mind that a pupil's potential may not currently be being reached.

Provision for children with high learning potential

Opportunities for extension and enrichment are built into all our schemes of work. Curriculum/class plans reference procedures used to identify high learning potential and differentiation is provided according to the needs of individual pupils.

Types of provision:

1. Classroom based

- Teachers have high expectations.
- Teachers provide verbal and written feedback.
- Tasks are designed to take account of levels of existing knowledge, skills and understanding.
- There are planned extension opportunities or open-ended tasks.
- There are planned opportunities for higher order thinking skills
- Scope for free rendering and note-taking
- Use of Main Lesson work-tasks as open-ended assignments.
- Use of mixed ability groups

2. School based

This varies according to subject area and is covered using a variety of methods, including:

- Opportunities for leadership (e.g.; fundraising)
- Pupil participation in forums/councils
- Enrichment opportunities – both subject-focused and cross-curricular – including: Festivals, Visiting speakers/artists, Specialist teaching

3. Out-of-school provision

- Educational and Social-Cultural visits – these will be open to all pupils in the class.
- National schemes/competitions/festivals

Monitoring Pupil Progress

Class Teachers monitor the provision and progress of pupils with high learning potential in their class. They liaise with subject and learning support teachers in line with school assessment monitoring procedures. Class Teachers share questions and pedagogy in department meetings, and where appropriate in child studies.

Subject Teachers are aware of the gifts and talents demonstrated by pupils in their classes, and, where appropriate, differentiate their teaching to support these pupils' potential. They report to Class Teachers, in keeping with school policy.

The SENCO/Learning Support Department works with teachers to support planning and documentation (e.g. IEP's, provision mapping for pupils who have high learning potential), meeting regularly to review progress.

Monitoring and recording progress

Teachers, including the SENCO, assess and measure pupils' progress in relation to their planned learning objectives, school set or standard norms (class based assessments, class screenings using WRAT tests, individual assessments). They communicate this to pupils, parents and colleagues formally (school reports, IEP's) and informally (celebration/descriptive praise, school and class displays).

Process for review and development

All teachers are responsible for the progress of all pupils they teach. They are responsible for ensuring that pupils with high learning potential are given appropriate learning opportunities and are making progress in keeping with their abilities.

A whole school register of pupils with high learning potential is maintained by the SENCo/Learning Support Department. It is updated in consultation with all staff.

In the annual review of curriculum provision, class and subject teachers identify areas for development for pupils with high learning potential.

The SENCo/Learning Support Department will support the provision for pupils with high learning potential and will assist teachers in embedding the provision in curriculum planning.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually.