

Our Ref:
PP/jmp

16 March 2007



Bransgore
Church of England
Primary School

Newsletter No.8

Dear Parents/Carers

Gifted & Talented Children

All our children have different abilities and talents.

For some, the learning journey may be hard due to learning difficulties (Special Educational Needs). For others, they may be more able and find learning easy.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.



Children have a learning difficulty if they:

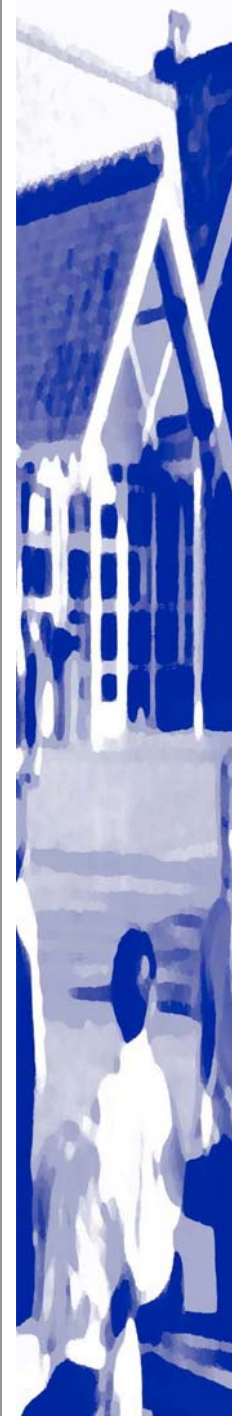
- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

The children at Bransgore with SEN make better than can be expected progress, compared to National standards. We have a Special Needs Co-ordinator, (SENCO) Mr Revell, who leads this work.

The children are reviewed and placed on the SEN register. All parents of children on the register are informed and involved with an individual education plan. Currently, about 5% of our school population are placed on the SEN register.



At Bransgore, we also recognise that some children have above average abilities in a wide range of subjects and skills.



Website: www.bransgoreprimaryschool.co.uk

'A Place Where A Child Can Flourish'

Ringwood Road
Bransgore
Christchurch
Dorset
BH23 8JH
T 01425 672272
F 01425 674554
Headteacher
Mr Peter Pretlove

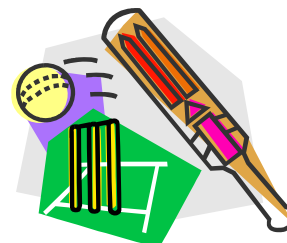
We also well exceed national expectations of the numbers of children at Bransgore who attain highly.

As with SEN, we have a lead teacher, Gifted & Talented Co-ordinator (GATCO) who is Miss Richards. We also have a register and seek to enrich the provision for those children.

National guidance states:

Gifted refers to the top five percent of the school population in academic subjects and talented to the five percent in other subjects and skills.

This does not mean that children have to be gifted or talented in every subject, or skill. Some areas of learning may be as high as forty percent. Skills also include expressive arts, sport, music and caring.



The more able pupils should be the top thirty percent. Research backs our view that current national tests at seven and eleven do not suit the needs of all gifted and talented pupils.



Nationally, many gifted or talented (G&T) pupils hide or deliberately under achieve due to peer pressure, "nerd/boffin" cultures!

The Government has introduced a new census which schools complete three times a year. Part of this requires schools to identify the names of children on the G&T register. The idea is to track the children's progress into Key Stage Three to ensure that our brightest pupils do not disappear in secondary schools.

At Bransgore, we currently have forty percent of children on the G&T register. Measured against the new National Quality Standards, we are judged to be exemplary and the National Primary Strategy Director for Gifted & Talented visited Bransgore during February and she thought our provision was outstanding, which was encouraging.

As Head, I am a member of Hampshire Steering Group for G & T and lead briefings for Head Teachers and GATCO. Gifted & Talented children show their abilities in many different ways. Their academic achievement indicates attainment well beyond age related expectations as defined by national curriculum levels.

Some children may show exceptional performance across the subject as a whole, while others may be strong orally in a particular area of that subject.



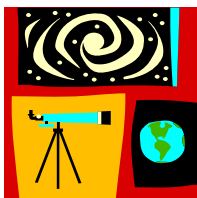
In English and mathematics, gifted and talented children show:

- creativity and originality – working in new and imaginative ways;
- ability to make connections between different concepts they have learned – seeing patterns or relationships and applying these to new contexts;
- independence and perseverance – demonstrating initiative and persistence in completing tasks or pursuing lines of enquiry;
- capacity to learn and understand new ideas and ways of working quickly;
- communication skills;

- expressing ideas succinctly;
- justifying, qualifying and explaining what they say;
- using language in ways that reflect an appreciation of the knowledge and interests of specific audiences;
- ability to take on demanding tasks – researching comparing and synthesising information from a range of different sources, including, ICT;
- ability to argue and reason:
 - creating and sustaining accounts and reasoned arguments at more abstract levels in both speech and writing;
 - grasping the essence of any content, reorganising it in ways that are logical and offering new conclusions or insights;
 - asking questions to gain information, justifying choices and taking up or challenging others' approaches to a problem.



The other main areas recognised are:

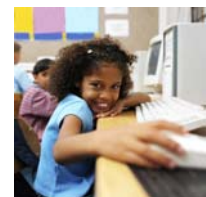


- science, creativity, speaking and listening, French, art & design, design & technology, physical education, information technology, history, geography, religious education, music and the Bransgore skills. These skills include: empathy, reasoning, ideas, communication, solution finding, thinking skills, etc.

We provide a variety of enrichment opportunities which includes:

- a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs – where needs are beyond what the school can provide, we advise parents of external agencies they can access
- Opportunities for artistic, musical, dramatic and sporting development
- Enrichment opportunities within and beyond the core subjects
- Visits, experts, master-classes
- Competitions – both in school and national promoted through 'Wow board'
- Celebration board 'Wow board' to enhance self esteem and encourage exceptional working
- Appropriate pastoral care and counselling, i.e. Helping Hands and Learning Mentors for reading and mathematics
- Peer nominations of learning experts – example ICT Expert. These groups meet half-termly with the Subject Leader to be taught skills above and beyond normal expectations. This expertise is then recognised in class to boost the self-esteem of our brighter children.
- On-line home link learning differentiated by the teacher up to Year 7 Key Stage 3

'WOW!'



Provision – Distinct teaching and learning programme

Strategies within the classroom

- Varied and flexible grouping within Year Groups – Learning groups provide flexibility setting for Maths, English and Science. Where gender issues arise a flexible approach is used

- Withdrawal of very able for higher level work within small groups – Master classes for enrichment, classroom experts taught skills beyond their Year Group by Subject Leaders, 1/2 termly in assembly time. Experts in Personal, Social Skills are Buddies within the school.
- Upward differentiation/extension in schemes of work – Brain Academy materials and KS3 Year 7 programme of study
- Teaching thinking skills in a subject context are embedded in the way we teach. Whole school use of Six Thinking Hats to facilitate different kinds of thinking and ideas
- Asking high order questions which encourage investigation enquiry
- Setting clear and challenging targets
- Enabling children to evaluate their own work
- Use of 'Thematic Link' plan, do, review and present which is consistent from Year F to Year 6, provides ownership of learning and 'no ceiling' on learning



Identification Strategies

A range of identification strategies are used by staff in the detection of gifted and talented children at Bransgore. Identification will be an on-going process aided by assessment (both formative and summative) and by provision. The Assessment for Learning (A4L) is identified within our policy.

- All gifted and talented children will be highlighted in the A4L Logs
- Prior attainment records
- Optional SATS scores – in assessment diary 3 times yearly
- SATS test results in Yrs 2 and 6
- CoPS and Lucid tests
- The Assessment Manager and Statistician Assistant analyse whole school data on a termly basis – one strand being gifted and talented. This then leads to discussion with the Learning Leadership Team and Curriculum Teams
- Teacher assessments ongoing
- In-house tests – science
- Teacher nomination in core and foundation subjects
- Discussion with parents
- Subject specific checklists
- On-going assessment using open/differentiated tasks (identification through provision)
- Collation of evidence (i.e. individual pupil's work)
- Parental nomination – through discussion at parents evenings
- Peer nomination
- Focus observations in G & T assessment work held annually. It is reflective of a child's ability at that point in time



Each curriculum team has a file to which they can refer at anytime to the definitions for G & T in each subject area. These definitions are based on current research and national advice but are individual to the school.

The identification process will be alert to the difference between ability and achievement, taking care to include underachieving able children in the cohorts.

Parents of children who are named on the G & T Register will receive a letter from our GATCO informing them of their child's identified ability. This will be done on an annual basis, or as appropriate for individual children. **Please remember that this is a flexible register and a child may not always be on the register.**

Please don't worry about this register. We are simply trying to be open with parents as co-educators - **Parents are the most important and powerful influence on their child's education and progress!**



It's impossible to meet the individual needs of every child all the time; indeed, it would not be a sound grounding for real life if we did. We are, however, working very hard to recognise and realise the potential of every child in our school community. Provision for 'gifted and talented' fits squarely within this mission.

Meeting the needs of more able children is a part of ensuring the entitlement of **all** children to an appropriate education.

Yours sincerely

Peter Pretlove
Head Teacher

Attached to this letter are two checklists that may help parents:


- Generic qualities of the G & T Learner
- Characteristics of the gifted pupil



Characteristics of the gifted pupil

The following information may assist you in better understanding the nature of a gifted child.

Bright Child	Gifted Learner
<p>Knows the answers Is interested Has good ideas Works hard Answers the questions Top group Listens with interest Learns with ease Enjoys peers Grasps the meaning Completes assignments Is receptive Copies accurately Enjoys School Absorbs information Technician Good memoriser Enjoys straight forward sequential presentation Is alert Is pleased with own learning</p>	<p>Asks the questions Is highly curious Has wild silly ideas Plays around yet tests well Discusses in detail, elaborates Beyond the group Shows strong feelings/opinions Already knows Prefers adults Draws inferences Initiates projects Is intense Creates a new design Enjoys learning Manipulates information Inventor Good guesser Thrives on complexity Is keenly observant Is highly self critical</p>



Checklist for Generic qualities of the gifted or talented learner

Learning:	
	Is a rapid learner, who understands advanced topics easily
	Shows insight and fantasises about cause-effect relationships
	Persists in completing tasks
	Sees the problem quickly and takes the initiative
	Learns basic skills quickly and with little practice
	Is reluctant to practise skills already mastered, finding such practice futile
	Follows complex directions easily
	Constructs and handles high levels of abstraction
	Can cope with more than one idea at a time
	Has strong critical thinking skills and is self-critical
	Has surprising perception and deep insight
	Is a keen and alert observer, notes detail and is quick to see similarities/differences
	Displays intellectual and physical restlessness; once encouraged, is seldom a passive learner
	Has a remarkable range of general (or specialised) knowledge in one or more areas
	Possesses extensive general knowledge (often knows more than the teacher) and finds classroom books superficial
	Explores wide-ranging and special interests, frequently at great depth
	Has quick mastery and recall of information, seems to need no revision and is impatient with repetition
	Learns to read early and retains what is read; can recall in detail
	Has advanced understanding and use of language, but sometimes hesitates as the correct word is searched for and then used
	Sees greater significance in a story or film and continues the story
	Demonstrates a richness of imagery in informal language and brainstorming
	Can ask unusual (even awkward) questions or make unusual contributions to class discussions
	Asks many provocative, searching questions which tend to be unlike those asked by other students of the same age
	Has exceptional curiosity and constantly wants to know the reasons why
	Displays intellectual playfulness; fantasises and imagines; is quick to see connections and manipulate ideas
	Often sees unusual, rather than conventional, relationships
	Can produce original and imaginative work, even if defective in technical accuracy (e.g. poor spelling and/or handwriting)
	Wants to debate topics at greater depth
	Mental speed is faster than writing ability, so is often reluctant to write at length
	Prefers to talk rather than write and talks at speed with fluency and expression

Behavioural:

	Sets very high personal standards and is a perfectionist
	Is success-oriented and hesitates to try something where failure is a possibility
	Demonstrates a sense of humour and loves incongruities, puns and pranks
	May be behind peers in manual dexterity, which can be a source of frustration
	Can have a negative self-concept and suffer from poor social acceptance by age peers
	Daydreams and seems lost in another world
	Listens to only part of the explanation and sometimes appears to lack concentration, but always knows what is going on – when questioned usually knows the answer
	Often prefers company of older students and adults
	When interested, becomes absorbed for long periods and may be impatient with interference or abrupt change
	Can be stubborn in own beliefs
	Shows sensitivity and reacts strongly to things causing distress or injustice
	Empathises with others and often takes a leadership role; very understanding and sympathetic; and
	Shows unusual interest in adult problems such as important issues in current affairs (local and world), evolution, justice, the universe, etc.