



BIRCH COPSE PRIMARY SCHOOL
HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS POLICY

Version

Version: 1

Status:

Good practice

Introduction

Our school believes each pupil is entitled to a curriculum which extends knowledge, skills and understanding and develops independent learning. We aim to offer every child a level of challenge that leads to the highest standards of personal achievement through recognition of individual needs according to ability and aptitude. Our aim is to develop the potential of all pupils whatever their abilities and talents and by doing this, to develop their self-esteem and raise the general standards of the whole group.

The intention of this school policy is to establish a whole school approach and commitment to meeting the needs of pupils with high learning potential. It will provide a framework for identifying and meeting the needs of High Potential Learners within our school and will identify strategies and approaches that teachers may find useful to enable this policy to develop in practice.

What do we mean by High Potential Learners?

Birch Copse has taken the decision to use the term High Potential Learners (HPL) to describe the children whom we support, instead of the word 'gifted' or 'gifted and talented' or 'more able' or 'very able'; which are all terms that have been used in schools and the media in the past.

By labelling a child as more able or gifted, we feel there is a risk of complacency and assumption that those children will succeed and achieve no matter what. At Birch Copse, we understand the importance of supporting and challenging all children, including those who are high attaining. We promote a growth mind set and school values including, 'trying our best, perseverance and challenging ourselves'. We understand that children require their individual potential and talents to be recognised, nurtured, supported and challenged in order for them to feel fulfilled and to develop good self-esteem. This whole school approach will support children in meeting their true potential.

We use the term "High Potential Learner" to mean those pupils who are capable of excelling academically in a wide range of subjects such as English, drama or technology. It also refers to those pupils who may excel in practical skills such as sports, leadership and artistic performance. A child could be identified as a High Potential Learner across many areas of the curriculum or within a specific subject or area.

Some children are very significantly advanced in their cognitive abilities, setting them even more apart from other children their age. The characteristics and difficulties associated with high learning potential children will be even more extreme in children who are exceptionally or profoundly gifted.

Exceptionally gifted children are those with cognitive abilities in the top 0.1% of the population (or 1 in 1000)

Profoundly gifted children are those with cognitive abilities in the top 0.03% of the population (or 1 in 3333).

Identification

The identification of High Potential Learners at Birch Copse is an ongoing process. Each year, teachers will be provided with 2 dedicated opportunities to discuss pupils and make amendments to the register. However, updates are not only restricted to these times and changes can be influenced by people beyond the teaching staff.

There are a variety of different sources of evidence that we can use to discover the strengths and talents of our learners. Effective identification is the first step to appropriate provision.

Methods of identification

At Birch Copse, we use a range of methods to identify High Potential Learners, with further detail provided below.

Observation

The belief that a pupil may be a High Potential Learner can stem from a number of different sources and can occur at different stages of his/ her development:

Prior to joining Birch Copse:

- parents may notice that their child develops skills more quickly in comparison to students of a similar age;
- rapid development in early childhood may be recorded at developmental check ups by health personnel;
- friends may draw attention to the child's development of early speech, physical development and/or his/her use of a wide vocabulary;

Once enrolled at Birch Copse:

- teachers at foundation stages may find that the newly enrolled student is able to accomplish tasks far beyond the normal expectation for a similar age cohort; and
- teachers at other levels and in some specific subjects may note that challenging tasks are accomplished with ease coupled with a demand for further challenge, which if not satisfied, is rapidly replaced by boredom.

All children are different, but it has been shown that many High Potential Learners share common characteristics because of their advanced thinking ability. Below is a list of the most common characteristics of High Potential Learners that has been drawn up through research by Dr Linda Silverman. Different young people with high ability will have a different mixture of these, but each should display a majority of them. Consideration of the following characteristics are one of the methods used for identifying pupils at Birch Copse.

High Potential Learners:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to learn quickly• Have an excellent memory• Have a long attention span• Are early or avid readers• Persevere when interested• Have a wide range of interests• Are good at puzzles• Are emotionally sensitive (feelings hurt easily)• Have a high level of energy• Prefer older companions/adults• Are keen observers• Have a vivid imagination	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have a rich vocabulary• Reason well (good thinkers)• Show ability with numbers• Show compassion• Are perfectionists• Are intense• Are morally sensitive• Have strong curiosity• Have a quirky or grown-up sense of humour• Are concerned with justice and fairness• Tend to question authority• Have judgement mature for age at times
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Further explanations of these characteristics can be found in Appendix 1.

Subject specific characteristics guidance is also available to teachers to aid the identification of High Potential Learners in a particular area. See Appendix 2 for more information.

Parent/Carer Nomination

Parents'/carers' knowledge of their children and can be a very useful source of information in identifying a High Potential Learners. Parents/carers can, however, feel vulnerable in claiming that their son/daughter is a High Potential Learner for fear of being regarded as a parent/carers 'who thinks they have a genius'. It is parents/carers, through observation of their child from the early years, who commonly spot the ability long before the child goes to school. Parents/carers can provide valuable insights into the strengths and issues of their child's learning needs and should be consulted so that support offered in school can be maintained at home. A parent/carers may also have built up a portfolio of the child's out-of-school accomplishments. At Birch Copse, parents are provided with three formal opportunities to discuss their child with the class teacher at Parent's Evenings. Information gained during these times and informal discussions will support the class teacher in identifying pupils and amending the register.

Peer Nomination

Pupils in the classroom can be very good at nominating High Potential Learners. One example of a peer nomination exercise takes the form of a game of make believe. Pupils are asked to imagine that they are stranded on a desert island and must name the classmate who would be the best organiser (leader, persuader), best judge (settles arguments, fair), fixer (improves things), inventor (invents, discovers), entertainer, etc (Jenkins, 1978). Teachers may need to take care to guide students with regard to the necessary criteria to be considered.

Self-Nomination

This may be used with older pupils who are often more self-aware and know their capabilities. Each self-nomination should be investigated, as it is important to be aware that in some cases underachievement may mask the presentation of abilities.

Nomination by others

It is important to include as many people as possible in the identification process. This includes making contact through meetings and writing letters to organisations that work with groups from the school. For example, the following may all be able to provide valuable insights: - scouting groups; - local sporting clubs/teams; - drama or music groups; - after-school clubs; - day-care facilities; and - youth clubs. This information can then be recorded in Birch Copse's registration system.

Assessments

In all subject areas, teachers will be informally assessing the abilities and achievements of children within their class, on a continuous basis.

In KS1, termly summative assessments are completed by class teachers, considering the children's learning throughout the term to form a judgement. Assessment grids are used in Reading, Writing and Maths. In year 1, a formal phonics assessment is completed at the end of the year and SATS are completed at the end of Year 2.

In KS2, teachers complete a termly summative assessment, considering the children's learning throughout the term to form a judgement in Writing. Tests are completed by the children in Maths and Reading.

The results of these assessments can provide one source of information to aid the teacher's identification of a High Potential Learner.

Strategies for supporting and challenging High Potential Learners

Able pupils have a range of needs and we should aim to provide a challenging curriculum throughout their education. This can be achieved through a variety of strategies: -

Differentiation

The management of teaching and learning to ensure that the curriculum meets the need and abilities of every pupil. In all aspects of their work children are taught according to their ability.

Enrichment

Giving pupils supplementary tasks in areas of the curriculum as appropriate, which are intended to broaden or deepen skills or understanding, using strategies that exploit their recognised abilities, always ensuring a fair balance is maintained.

Acceleration

In individual cases, it may be decided that it is necessary for a child to be given the opportunity to access the next year group's curriculum, in their particular area of strength.

Emotional

It is important to recognise that whilst developing the abilities and talents of a High Potential Learner in a specific domain there should also be regard for developing the 'whole person', to this end we endeavour to create an environment where achievement and success for all are encouraged, valued and celebrated.

Individual Challenge Plans

In cases where a High Potential Learner's needs are not able to be fully met within differentiation and enrichment in class, it may be decided that they require an ICP. This document records targets set for the child and provisions that are being made in order to ensure they are supported and challenged appropriately. This will be regularly reviewed and also shared with parents/carers.

Record of High Potential Learners

It will be the responsibility of each teacher to help maintain a record of the High Potential Learners within the school, in conjunction with the lead member of staff. The subject leader will collate information in the form of a register which will be reviewed and monitored twice a year.

It is important that such information is passed on at the end of each academic year so that provision can be made to meet the needs of each individual child as he/she moves on. When a child leaves, the next school will be informed of the area(s) in which the child has shown high potential.

Parents will be informed of their child's abilities in an informal capacity. This will usually be within the context of the termly parent/teacher discussions where the class teacher can discuss the range of opportunities available to develop individual potential and ability.

Organisation

Class

The Class Teacher should plan a variety of opportunities for High Potential Learners. Teachers should aim to employ a variety of teaching styles and create a stimulating learning environment. Planning for these pupils in the classroom should not always be seen as an extra task for the child. Work can be differentiated, extension opportunities identified and higher order skills (Blooms Taxonomy) developed in order to provide suitably challenging learning. Staff are encouraged to obtain additional resources as appropriate and seek advice if necessary.

Year groups

All children will have equal access to the curriculum. However, in some subject areas High Potential Learners pupils may benefit from initiatives such as ability grouping across one or more class/year groups.

School

There are a variety of ways in which our school can extend and develop the potential of the individual.

- Clubs
The school provides club activities, most of which happen before and after school. These provide opportunities for all pupils but may particularly enhance and extend a High Potential Learner's education. A club list is sent out at the beginning of each term.
- Curriculum Initiatives
Drama productions
Assemblies
Musical tuition and opportunities to perform
Sports tournaments
Class visits
Art and Craft/use of Artist in Residence
Poetry and Story Writing
Competitions

Parental involvement

As a school we encourage positive parental involvement in a child's education. This can be used to support and extend more able pupils through:-

- Parents working alongside individuals and groups
- Encouraging their child to join external organisations
- Continuing the home-school partnership, helping and encouraging children with homework and school related tasks.

Responsible officer

High Potential Learner's Aspect Leader

Date of last review: October 2020

Dates of amendments:

Date of next review: October 2023

Appendix 1

Learns Rapidly – High Potential Learners are able to learn rapidly and easily make connections, often jumping ahead of others. They often want to move on quickly and do not enjoy repetition.

Extensive Vocabulary – The majority of High Potential Learners begin talking early (before 12 months old) and progress quickly through the stages. They can use complex sentence structures and are naturally able to understand difficult words and use them in the correct context. Some High Potential Learners are more interested in numbers than words or have a particular learning difficulty such as dyslexia and do not excel in this area.

There are also a small percentage of High Potential Learners who are late talkers. These children are able to follow complex conversations and respond accordingly (although non-verbally). These children actually have an excellent understanding of language; but are not verbally expressive until much later than their peers.

Excellent Memory – Many High Potential Learners have excellent memories. They are able to remember facts after being told only once or twice. They can remember the way to places they have been to only a few times. Some High Potential Learners have very good detailed memories about things that happened when they were very young. They may not have such a good memory for instructions they are given as their minds can get distracted before they carry them out!

Reasons Well – High Potential Learners are able to reason well in discussions and decision making. Although their decisions and viewpoint may not always agree with those around them, there is often a logical thought process leading to them.

Strong Curiosity (asking questions) – As High Potential Learners have an inbuilt capacity to learn quickly and a good memory, they want to know as much as they can about many things. This means they ask many questions about things around them or related to one another.

Mature for Age – Their advanced thinking skills and perception means that High Potential Learners may seem mature for their age. However, there are also times when High Potential Learners appear to behave immaturely as well.

Good Sense of Humour – High Potential Learners often have a well-developed sense of humour for their age. They are able to see irony in things and sometimes have a quirky viewpoint. They may develop the use of sarcasm and witty banter far earlier than their peers and this can sometimes lead to difficulties with friendships. Although adults will be able to appreciate and understand a High Potential Learner's highly developed sense of humour, other children might not get the joke at all.

Keen Observation – High Potential Learners often pick up a lot of information from the world around them and their excellent memory means that much of this information is stored, leading to great observational ability and quick learning.

Compassion for Others – Many High Potential Learners have great compassion for other people and are very perceptive to other people's feelings. This can cause them to become upset at times when confronted with suffering.

Vivid Imagination – Whilst most children are imaginative, many High Potential Learners have a vivid imagination, having pretend friends and creating characters for cuddly toys, although their imagination may be limited to a particular area of interest. They can invent complex, imaginative games that other children of the same age find difficult to follow.

Long Attention Span – High Potential Learners are generally able to concentrate on areas of interest for long periods of time. They may have difficulty concentrating fully on something they find tedious and may

look as if they are not paying attention (daydreaming or fidgeting); although if asked they can often repeat what is being said. Because their minds work quickly, they may seem to flit from one subject to another, although these may be logically connected in their thought process. As High Potential Learners tend to learn quickly, they do not need much repetition, and this can cause them to become frustrated when asked to do more of the same.

Ability with Numbers – High Potential Learners often have ability with numbers well beyond their age group. They can find it easy to grasp the abstract ideas in mathematics and can relate knowledge to new situations. However, it should be noted that some High Potential Learners are more interested in words and language or artistic pursuits than numbers and hence do not excel in mathematics. Indeed, some High Potential Learners may have a particular learning difficulty with maths (dyscalculia) and may require additional support to gain confidence in the subject.

Concern with Justice and Fairness – High Potential Learners often appear to be overly concerned with justice and fairness. They understand the need for rules and they often hear the rule and adhere to it. They can get very upset when others are not sticking to the rules. This can sometimes become a problem during play times at school as other children may in fact enjoy breaking rules and pushing boundaries away from the restrictions of the classroom. Younger High Potential Learners may require pastoral support to understand that not everyone shares their diligent observance of rules and that sometimes during play, it is ok to bend the rules as long as nobody gets hurt (either emotionally and physically).

Sensitivity – Many High Potential Learners are emotionally sensitive, causing them to become angry through frustration, upset over ‘silly’ things or overly scared. Some High Potential Learners are also sensitive to loud noises, have a heightened sense of smell, taste or touch which can cause them distress.

Wide Range of Interests – Many High Potential Learners are interested in a variety of subjects; they soak up information and their knowledge and understanding of the world is exceptional from an early age. They are often passionate about certain subjects, some of which are temporary and that they will learn about deeply for a short period and others that they will follow throughout life.

Ability with Puzzles – High Potential Learners are normally very good at problem solving. This shows itself from a young age with the ability to complete jigsaw puzzles beyond those recommended for their age. Often they need less prompting than other children and are able to work independently on puzzles that interest them, be they word-based, number-based or logic based.

High Energy Level – Some High Potential Learners have a high energy level from a very young age. This can impact upon sleep patterns from birth. As toddlers, children with high energy levels can be difficult to handle and are constantly on the go. Children with high energy levels need a lot of physical exercise and may learn better outdoors or after exercise. Having high energy can mean that a child fidgets and finds it difficult to sit still, except when they are fully engaged in a task.

Perfectionist – Some High Potential Learners have a tendency towards perfectionism, and for some this can mean they have a fear of failure resulting in them not wanting to try new things if they think their performance may fall short of perfection. High potential learners can be very self-critical or become emotional if things don't go well in their eyes (even if others feel they did what was expected of them)

Passionate about Interests – Whilst High Potential Learners may not always appear to be paying close attention, there are often deeply passionate in their chosen areas of interest. This can cause problems in school as they can become upset when an adult tries to get them to move on from their preferred tasks. This kind of intensity can be difficult for others to cope with but there are obvious advantages for the child as they get older and are able to focus intently on their areas of interest.

Questions Authority – Many High Potential Learners question authority and feel it is their right to do so because they spot mistakes or feel they know better. Unfortunately, their manner can sometimes seem arrogant to figures of authority. For the learner, respect is not gained merely by being an adult, it needs to

be earned. Adults can earn respect by listening to the young person and acting fairly. It may take time for a High Potential Learner to respect an adult; but at the same time, it is important for adults to reinforce the importance of following instructions set out as a persistent failure to do so may well result in disciplinary measures.

Avid Reader – Many High Potential Learners learn to read easily (some very early) and enjoy different kinds of books to entertain them (imaginative fiction) and extend their learning (topic and non-fiction books). Many enjoy poetry because of the play with words and sounds and the different ways of making sense of the world. High Potential Learners often progress very quickly from picture books and devour all kinds of reading material. Some High Potential Learners learn to read easily but enjoy a more limited range of material, for example only reading non-fiction for learning about particular topics. Some may have a learning difficulty that prevents them from reading easily, such as dyslexia.

Prefers Older Companions – Many, but by no means all, High Potential Learners have difficulty finding friends within their age group. Many prefer the company of older children and adults to bounce their ideas off and play games with, especially in the younger years. This is often because they think in complex ways and are interested in different things to children of the same age.

Art

More able learners in art may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Think and express themselves in creative, original ways
- Want to follow a different plan to others, challenge tasks given or extend their brief in seemingly unrelated directions
- Enthusiastic and interested in the visual world; have a strong desire to create in the visual form
- Driven by ideas and persevere until they have completed a task successfully, with little or no intervention from the teacher
- Take risks without knowing what the outcome will be
- Can be quirky and display humour
- Interested in the art world, art forms and culture
- Analyse and interpret their observations and present them creatively
- Work in innovative ways
- Enjoy experimenting with materials; able to go beyond the conventional and use materials and processes in creative and practical ways
- Communicate original ideas, insights and views
- Confidence in using a wide range of tools and techniques skilfully
- Keen to extend their technical abilities; sometimes get frustrated when other skills do not develop at the same time
- Explore ideas, problems and sources on their own and collaboratively, with a sense of purpose and meaning
- Make unusual connections between their own work and others' work
- Critically evaluate visual work and other information

Design and technology

More able learners in design and technology may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- High levels of technological understanding and application
- High-quality making and precise practical skills
- Readily accept and discuss new ideas; conceptualise beyond the information given
- Have flashes of inspiration and highly original or innovative ideas
- Demonstrate different ways of working or different approaches to issues
- Identify the simple, elegant solution from complex, disorganised data
- Reflective and constructively self-critical
- Link the familiar with the novel
- See application in 2D or 3D
- Transfer and adapt ideas from the familiar to a new problem
- Sensitive to aesthetic, social and cultural issues when designing and evaluating
- Capable of rigorous analysis and interpretation of products
- Conduct independent research to solve problems
- Work comfortably in contexts beyond their own experience and empathise with users' needs and wants

Appendix 2- Subject specific identification characteristics

English

More able learners in English may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Read widely, fluently and independently
- Read with meaning, drawing on inference and deduction; can “read between the lines”
- Sensitive to the nuance of language
- Use language precisely, with technical accuracy
- Delight in the meaning of words
- Use extended vocabulary
- Show pleasure and involvement in experimenting/playing with language and manipulating language to effect
- Awareness of the special features of language, such as rhyme
- Write or talk in imaginative, lucid and cogent ways, showing flair and creativity
- Can express ideas succinctly and elegantly
- Grasp the essence of particular styles and adapt them to their own purposes
- Can display a sophisticated sense and appreciation of humour; this humour can be “quirky”; understand irony etc
- Contribute with incisive, critical responses
- Can analyse own work
- Can produce written work that is substantial and the product of sustained, well-directed effort
- Elaborate on content that is exceptional for their age
- Can engage seriously and creatively with moral and social themes expressed in literature
- Can justify opinions convincingly and challenge others' points of view
- Strong communicative skills
- Articulate and confident speakers
- Very good listening skills
- Show enthusiasm and enjoyment in the subject; can be sensitive

NB: Learners who are more able in English may demonstrate marked ability in reading, writing, speaking and listening. However, it is not unusual for development in one of these areas to be more pronounced than in others, e.g. younger children who are fluent readers may be reluctant writers.

Geography

More able learners in geography may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Understand concepts clearly; can apply this understanding to new situations to make interpretations, develop hypotheses, reach conclusions and explore solutions
- Understand geographical ideas and theories; apply them to real situations
- Communicate effectively using both the written and spoken word, in ways that are appropriate to task and audience
- Learn subject-specific vocabulary and use it accurately
- Reason, argue and think logically
- Able to manipulate abstract symbols and recognise patterns and sequences
- Use and apply mathematical principles and formulae to solve geographical tasks and problems
- Identify their own geographical questions and sequence investigations
- Understand, and able to explain, complex processes and interrelationships
- Enjoy using graphs, charts, maps, diagrams and other visual methods to present information
- Competent and confident in using the wide range of visual resources required
- Well-considered opinions on issues such as the environment and life in different places
- Wide-ranging general knowledge about the world and topical issues
- Able to transfer knowledge from one subject to another
- Creative and original in their thinking, frequently going beyond the obvious solutions

History

More able learners in history may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Perform at levels of literacy that are advanced for their age
- Able to communicate effectively in different forms
- Use subject-specific vocabulary with accuracy and confidence
- Show particular skill at inference and deduction
- Able to make logical connections between events and people
- Good understanding of cause and effect
- Able to set both new and previously acquired information in a chronological framework
- Broad range of general and historical knowledge
- Can discuss the significance of events, people and changes
- Maturity in ability to analyse historical sources and organise historical information
- Able to demonstrate and use a wide and growing knowledge base
- Able to use several sources simultaneously with confidence and perception, including complex and ambiguous ones
- Keen awareness of the characteristics of different historical periods
- Able to question, challenge and develop own lines of enquiry
- Good grasp and understanding of historical interpretation
- Can make imaginative links between the topics studied in multiple subject fields
- Ability to hypothesise; can make judgements and justify them
- Can take on broad concepts
- Offer unexpected insights
- Willingness to search for new information and ideas
- Enquiring mind
- Can cope with tentative conclusions
- Developed sense of empathy and imagination
- Use visits to historical sites as a basis for further investigation

ICT

More able learners in ICT may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Use and learn about ICT hardware and software quickly, confidently, efficiently and independently
- Demonstrate ICT capability significantly above that expected for their age
- Use ICT to support their studies in other subjects
- Use their skills and knowledge of ICT to solve problems, design information systems and suggest improvements to existing systems
- Consider the limitations of ICT tools and information sources
- Consider social, economic and ethical issues raised by the use of ICT
- Consider the purpose for which information is processed and communicated, and how the characteristics of different kinds of information influence its use
- Use initiative to exploit the potential of more advanced features of ICT tools and skills, e.g. coding
- Explore independently beyond the given breadth of an ICT topic
- Develop systems that meet personal needs and interests
- Grasp and premeditate structures, for example structures in data and directories
- Intrigued, rather than frustrated, by problems; show tenacity and creativity when solving them
- Inclination and ability to help others, e.g. explaining the logic of required steps

NB: Many learners may enter school with well-developed skills and knowledge in aspects of IT. Some may have skills and knowledge in more advanced aspects, including coding. Teachers should be aware of this and provide opportunities for their further development and application.

Mathematics

More able learners in mathematics may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Rapid and sound memorisation of mathematical material
- Learn and understand mathematical ideas quickly
- Reason logically: can verify, justify and prove
- Work systematically and accurately
- More analytical
- Recognise patterns easily and see the formal structure of a problem in a way that leads to ideas for action
- Use mathematical symbols accurately and confidently as part of the thinking process
- Make jumps in reasoning
- Think flexibly, adapting problem-solving approaches
- Demonstrate curiosity and enthusiasm for mathematical problems
- Make connections between the concepts they have learned
- Can take a creative approach to solving mathematical problems
- Reverse their direction of thought – may work backwards and forwards when solving a problem
- Communicate their reasoning and justify their methods
- Sustain their concentration throughout longer tasks and persist in seeking solutions
- Enjoy working at increased depth
- Adept at posing their own questions and pursuing lines of enquiry
- Take delight in numbers and use them in other areas of the curriculum, e.g. story-telling
- Enjoy mathematical puzzles and problems

NB: Some learners who are highly able in mathematics perform at levels that are unusually advanced for their age. It is recommended to challenge the pupil with broad but challenging enrichment and extension activities, rather than accelerate through the curriculum.

Physical education

More able learners in physical education may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Use the body with confidence in differentiated, expressive and imaginative ways
- Good sense of shape, space direction and timing
- Movement is fluent and can be elegant
- High degree of control of their body; good control of gross and fine body movements and can handle objects skilfully
- High degree of motivation and commitment to practice and performance
- Use technical terms effectively, accurately and fluently
- Able to analyse and evaluate their own and others' work, using results for self-improvement
- High level of understanding of principles of health-related exercise and their application in a variety of activities
- Particularly high levels of fitness for their age
- Specific strengths in particular areas, e.g. games or dance
- Able to perform advanced skills and techniques and transfer skills between activities
- Good decision makers; able to take the initiative; demonstrate autonomy, leadership and independence of thought
- Able to reflect on processes and outcomes to improve performance
- Take risks with ideas and approaches
- Show perseverance and commitment
- Involvement with a range of related extracurricular activities
- Understand the need for effective coaching

NB: In addition to the above characteristics, specific sports and physical activities will have their own list of skills and abilities.

Science

More able learners in science may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Aware of how the context influences the interpretation of science content
- Recognise patterns and relationships in science data
- Can hypothesise/predict based on valid evidence and draw conclusions
- Decide quickly how to investigate fairly and manipulate variables
- Enjoy researching obscure facts and applying scientific theories, ideas and models when explaining a range of phenomena
- Recognise and process reliable, valid and accurate data; can explain why data is unreliable, invalid or inaccurate
- Inquisitive about how things work and why things happen
- Good observational skills
- Enjoy talking with the teacher about new information or ideas
- Think flexibly, generalise ideas and adapt problem-solving approaches
- Ask many questions
- Enjoy logical reasoning
- May be able to miss out steps when reasoning
- Strive for maximum accuracy in measurements of all sorts
- Use advanced and extensive vocabulary, including the use of appropriate language from other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics
- Put forward objective arguments, using combinations of evidence and creative ideas, and question other people's conclusions
- Extremely interested in finding out more about things around them
- Read widely on science or science fiction
- Have scientific hobbies and/or members of scientific clubs and societies
- Able to sustain their interest and concentration and go beyond an obvious answer with greater depth
- Able to evaluate findings and think critically; can be self-critical
- Easily bored by over-repetition of basic ideas; may approach undemanding work casually and carelessly

Modern foreign languages

More able learners in modern foreign languages may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Early awareness of the second language as a separate system
- Curiosity about how language works
- Ability to extrapolate general rules from samples
- Ability to pick up new language and structures quickly
- Ability to make connections and classify words and structures, e.g. to help them learn more efficiently
- Ability to identify, memorise and reproduce new sounds
- Strong desire to put language together by themselves
- Creativity and imagination when using language
- Desire to ask further questions and seek solutions
- Awareness and use of a range of strategies for learning
- Intense interest in the cultural features of the language studied
- Ability to transfer skills across and to other languages

NB: Becoming a competent and independent language learner is a process which develops alongside intellectual maturity and familiarity with the language and culture. Linguistic development is also very dependent on input and opportunity.

Bilingualism may or may not indicate exceptional aptitude in language learning, but taking account of learners' experience and expertise in another language (e.g. home language) is an important factor in planning and in building confidence and motivation.

Music

More able learners in music may display a selection of the following characteristics:

- Captivated by sound and engage fully with music
- Select an instrument with care; may be unwilling to relinquish the instrument
- Find it difficult not to respond physically to music
- Memorise music quickly, without any apparent effort
- Able to repeat more complex rhythmical and melodic phrases given by the teacher and repeat melodies (sometimes after only one hearing)
- Sing and play music with a natural awareness of the musical phrase; the music makes sense
- Particularly sensitive to melody, timbre, rhythms and patterns
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate through music, for example to sing with musical expression and with confidence
- Show strong preferences, single-mindedness and a sustained inner drive to make music
- Have the motivation and dedication to persevere and practise; show a commitment to achieving excellence

NB: Pupils more often show their musical talent through the quality of their response than the complexity of their response. Musical quality is very difficult to define in words, as music is a different form of communication from language. Therefore, musical talent is at least as much about demonstrating a higher-quality response within levels as about attainment at higher levels. Musical talent can be seen at every level of attainment. Those with a high ability in music show a particular affinity with sound. This type of ability is sometimes difficult to identify, especially when it is not combined with more general ability.

Aptitude in music may reveal itself early given the right conditions, but can also remain hidden if a pupil has had limited encouragement or opportunity. Teachers may encounter pupils whose musical skills and performance are developed to such an extent that it is difficult to provide for them in the everyday classroom – as well as pupils in whom abilities of great promise are merely latent, and who need intensive and focused development of skills.