

Donabate-Portrane



Educate Together

Higher Able Children's Policy

Aims of Policy

In line with the Mission statement in the Educate Together Charter, we are committed to *"Placing the child at the centre of the educational process"*. As 'No child is an outsider' we believe that every child has the right to be included in a broad, enriched and extended curriculum so that they can fulfil their individual potential within whatever field of strength they possess.

Definition of a Highly Able Child (H.A.C.)

Highly able or exceptionally able is used to describe students who have been identified as requiring enrichment and extension opportunities outside of the normal curriculum for each individual standard. This includes children who may display a gift or talent in a certain area. These areas include:

- General Intellectual Ability
- Specific Academic Aptitude
- Creative or Productive Thinking
- Leadership Ability
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Psychomotor Ability e.g. athletics/gymnastics

It is generally recognised that 5% of the population may be 'highly able'. The term 'gifted' is reserved for those with an IQ higher than 130 (i.e. 2 % of the population)

Identification

Clear identification of higher able children (HAC) is essential so that we can provide efficiently and effectively for them. Teachers can plan appropriate work and stimuli which challenges and motivates. There is no single measurement with which to identify higher able children due to their individuality. Our key methods for identification include:

- Teacher observation
- Identification by psychologists/external agencies

HAC are likely to show some of the following characteristics. However it is important to remember that every child is an individual and will have their own particular strengths, talents and weaknesses. HAC may

Have keen powers of observation

Have learned to read early (often well before school age)

Read rapidly and widely

Have a well-developed vocabulary- take delight in using new and unusual words

Have great intellectual curiosity

Absorb information rapidly

Have a very good memory

Have the ability to concentrate deeply for prolonged periods

Have very good powers of reasoning and problem solving

Have intense interests

Possess an unusual imagination

Have a great interest in 'big issues'

Be very sensitive- perhaps become upset easily

Be very aware of right and wrong, concerned about injustices

Providing for H.A.C.

The main aim is to challenge and motivate highly able children on a daily basis within the classroom. The needs of these children are best met as part of a normal differentiated classroom provision. This includes enrichment and extension activities. The following in-class strategies may be used:

- Creating a stimulating and positive learning environment so that the children feel motivated and engaged in their learning.
- High teacher expectations which ensures that the children always work to their best ability.
- Provide a secure classroom environment where the children feel safe and therefore are able to take risks which will challenge their learning, even if they experience failure on occasion.
- Teachers provide enrichment and extension opportunities for pupils as part of their planned differentiation.
- Teach children how to ask higher order questions, as well as how to answer them so that these children are taking responsibility for their learning.
- Where relevant, provide opportunities for child-led learning such as project work, homework enrichment, book club and research tasks etc.
- Provide opportunities for self -assessment and peer assessment.
- Provide opportunities for children to set their own targets and evaluate their own learning.
- Provide opportunities to present their work to others such as at assemblies and class presentations.

Recording and Monitoring of H.A.C.

Screening tests (SIGMA/MICRA) and external assessments (psychologists/CYTI/IACG etc.) can be used to identify higher able children. Class profiles should identify HAC and the area of talent. This ensures that the information is passed onto the new class teacher at the start of a school year.

Responsibility for Co-ordination of H.A.C. policy

Principal and Senior Management Team will be responsible for:

- Writing and reviewing the policy
- Ensuring children have access to a wide and broad curricular experience
- Whole school assessment and monitoring systems
- Allocation for appropriate funding from the school budget

The Support Teacher will be responsible for:

- Working with the class teacher to compile the class profiles at the end of the school year
- Ensure the transfer of relevant information between teachers and class level
- Develop and share relevant expertise with staff
- Support and monitoring of HAC is provided for through team teaching and planning
- Provide parents with information on the Irish Centre for Talented Youth (CTYI), Irish Association for Gifted Children.
- Provide parents with advice/resources to progress HAC (see attached list from SESS).

The Class Teacher will be responsible for:

- Identifying the HAC in their class
- Support the HAC in setting appropriate targets for themselves
- Ensure appropriate provision through differentiated planning
- Use appropriate resources to challenge the HAC
- Report to parents on the progress of HAC
- Monitor the performance of the HAC
- Ensure the transfer of relevant information to the new class teacher

Staff Development

- Teachers are given the opportunity to identify areas where professional development is required and identify suitable courses to enhance their understanding of HAC.