

# Meeting the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils

Updated September 2011



Although young people should be both challenged and encouraged to raise their aspirations, nothing is worth damaging the quality of the relationship between parents and children. And it goes without saying, of course, that being placed on the AGT register is no guarantee of future success - **that** only comes through commitment and hard work: the fable of the hare and the tortoise is relived in schools every year as determined sloggers outpace those bright pupils who have unfortunately let complacency or arrogance get the better of them!

## How do we monitor our provision?

In 2010 we undertook a survey of AGT pupils and their parents to get feedback on perceptions. We were encouraged by the positive responses we received and use this information to further improve our teaching and learning provision. A similar survey will be undertaken this year.

## Among our tasks as a school for the academic year 2011-2012 we intend:

- 1 To continue exploring ways of adapting our curriculum and building up resources in order to meet the needs of our most able learners;
- 2 To develop inter-departmental activities which stimulate AGT learners;
- 3 To continue supporting extra-curricular provision for able learners;
- 4 To monitor and review the effectiveness of our tracking systems which monitor the progress of AGT pupils, intervening, where necessary with personal mentoring, to enable them to achieve their potential;

## Some of the characteristics which a very able student may present

They question readily. They can be persistent, resourceful and self-directed.

They analyse, synthesise and can think divergently.

They have a good vocabulary and can be verbally fluent.

They show creativity and imagination.

They have a wide range of hobbies and interests  
[and can sometimes be obsessive!].

They engage with complexity and can work independently.

They enjoy challenging and being challenged.

They perceive patterns, make links and grasp new ideas rapidly.

They take risks, can be sceptical and often have a good sense of humour.

They can show high levels of sensitivity and empathy.

Our AGT Coordinator is **Mr Richard Bradley**

Do you have a query? Please phone us on 01254 823362  
and ask to speak to Mr R. Bradley, our AGT Coordinator.

The school website [www.sarchs.com](http://www.sarchs.com) has many links to additional learning resources.

Accelerated learner  
**Autonomous**  
Challenging  
**Excited learner**  
Got what it takes  
**Innovator**  
Inquisitive  
**Outstanding**  
Risk taker  
**Unusual thinker**

**Achiever**  
Bright as a button  
**Creative**  
Exceptionally bright  
**Highly able**  
Insightful  
**Leader**  
Potential  
**Self directed**  
Wunderkind

Advanced  
**Capable**  
Emerging talent  
**Fast learner**  
Independent  
**Intelligent**  
Motivated  
**Promising**  
Spontaneous  
**Whizz kid**

“We want to encourage, inspire, challenge and care for each other”

[taken from Saint Augustine’s Mission Statement]

## Values statement

Our Mission Statement expresses our commitment to provide the best possible learning opportunities for every child we teach regardless of ability. We value all our pupils equally, recognising that their educational needs differ greatly. Each teaching group and each pupil presents us with a range of abilities. Our aim is to provide strategies which encourage **all** children to develop their potential as fully as possible. This is best achieved when teaching is attuned to specific learning needs. Pupils who demonstrate a very high level of understanding and creativity within a given subject, or across the curriculum, are entitled to extended stimulus and challenges. We intend to meet their needs, and those of all other learners, as effectively as possible.

## How do we identify pupils as being ‘gifted’ or ‘able’?

The school makes significant, but not exclusive, use of the Lancashire Local Authority guidelines in assessing giftedness, ability and talent.

**Giftedness:** Gifted children, with potential for exceptional performance, represent about 0.5% of the population. Lancashire guidelines indicate that pupils achieving average scores of **135** or more in any of the three Cognitive Ability Tests [CATs] taken early in Year 7 should be identified as ‘gifted’.

**High Ability:** Assessing children who are able isn’t so straightforward. Pupils may have measurably high ability in particular subjects or even across the curriculum. Cut-off points above which pupils are identified as being ‘able’ can, however, seem arbitrary and there is no automatic link between ability and achievement. Indeed, many of our high achievers at GCSE would not be identified as being particularly able given their CAT scores. Nevertheless, as a broad indicator, we are listing pupils achieving scores of **125** or more in any or all of the three CAT categories as ‘able’.

## What are Cognitive Ability Tests [CATs]?

Cognitive Ability Tests are taken early in Year 7 by pupils in most Lancashire high schools. The tests measure verbal ability [literacy], quantitative ability [numeracy] and non-verbal ability [reasoning]. Nearly all pupils fall within the score range 60 to 140. The average score is 100. These tests are primarily used to predict how children will perform nearly five years later when they take their GCSEs.

## How does the school identify pupils as being ‘talented’?

**Talent:** What is meant by ‘talented’ is open to many interpretations. The Local Authority’s guidelines define talent as an ability in art, music, sport or drama. However, at St Augustine’s, we have extended this definition to all subjects. We ask teachers to identify pupils who demonstrate a flair for or a distinctive talent in their subject. We also want pupils and parents to let us know of any extra-curricular talents which are being developed outside of school to give us a fuller picture of each child’s overall ability.

## How is this information recorded and will parents be informed?

Following government advice on good practice, we keep a regularly updated register of children identified as ‘able’, ‘gifted’ and ‘talented’ in some or all subjects. Parents of children on the register will be informed in writing as to why their child is on it. This already happens in the case of children identified as having Special Needs where a similar register is maintained and regularly updated.

## What will it be used for?

The register will be used:

- \* to inform teachers in their lesson planning and choice of resources;
- \* to ensure AGT pupils access challenges which reflect their potential;
- \* to monitor progress and intervene when this may be needed;
- \* to consider appropriate provision for extra-curricular enrichment.

## Will pupils who are not on the register miss out?

**Absolutely not.** We recognise that there’ll be many pupils not included on the register who nevertheless will go on to achieve excellent results. **We will continue to challenge all pupils to reach their highest potential.** The register will not detract from our commitment to equality of opportunity for all.

## What about the role of parents and guardians?

Most parents and guardians are committed to encouraging their children to build on their gifts, abilities and talents. They have a key role to play in complementing the work of the school. Much of the additional stimulus can be provided in enjoyable ways: a trip to a concert, a play or a film; a visit to a museum, an art gallery, a science exhibition or some other place of interest; time together browsing in a bookshop, a library or on the Internet. Most parents understand as well the importance of getting the balance right. It can be counterproductive if children sense that they are being placed under special pressure.