



Higher Achievers policy

This policy will be reviewed in full on a two-year basis.

This policy was reviewed in October 2025

Next review date: October 2027

This policy is reviewed by Michael Bradley.

Definitions

At Merton Abbey Primary School, the term 'higher achiever' refers to a child who has a broad range of achievement developed to a higher level significantly ahead of their year group, or the potential to develop these abilities. Those children who are identified as 'higher achievers' often have very well-developed learning skills and excel in one or more specific areas such as mathematics, English, science, history, sport, music, design or creative and performing arts.

Vision, aims and rationale

At Merton Abbey Primary School, we aim to provide an inclusive, rigorous and engaging curriculum that has been designed to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and society. We plan our teaching and learning in such a way that we enable each child to reach for the highest level of personal achievement. This policy helps to ensure that we recognise and support the needs of those children in our school who have been identified as 'higher achievers' according to national guidelines.

We respect the right of all children in our school, irrespective of difference in ability, to access learning across the curriculum and to develop their knowledge and skills. We recognise that all

children have talents that should be identified, developed and celebrated.

We value the uniqueness and individuality of all our children and want all children to thrive physically and mentally as our vision states. This also identifies our commitment to equipping children with high achievement and high aspirations. This policy guides the way in which this happens for our 'higher achieving' children.

Aims and objectives:

Through this policy we aim to:

- ensure that we recognise and support the needs of our children;
- enable children to develop and flourish in order to reach their full potential;
- ensure that we challenge and extend the children through the work that we set them;
- promote higher order thinking and independence

Identification

Higher achieving children are identified through prior attainment and starting points as well as teacher professional judgement in relation to their progress against age-related expectations (ARE). Teachers also refer to the checklist of characteristics for higher achieving children, which looks at personal traits, learning ability and learning styles.

See appendix 1 for checklist of characteristics for Higher Achieving children.

Tracking and assessment

The school will keep a list of identified higher achieving children and their area(s) of strength. The register is reviewed on a regular basis, in association with pupil progress considering how talents and abilities emerge.

Leadership

The Higher Achievers lead in school co-ordinates the provision and practice within the school for higher achieving children. The co-ordinators role includes:

- supporting staff in the identification of higher achieving children;
- ensuring that the higher achievers register is up to date;
- monitoring teachers' planning to ensure that suitable tasks and activities are being undertaken by higher achieving children across all curriculum areas;
- regularly carrying out 'picture building' tasks (such as talking to the children) to monitor provision for higher achieving children;
- monitoring the progress of higher achieving children through termly discussions with teachers;
- providing advice and support to staff on teaching and learning strategies for higher achieving children;

Curriculum, teaching and learning

In the classroom, every child has access to quality first teaching through which differentiation (matching teaching and learning to the relevant needs and abilities of pupils) will ensure that all

pupils have access to a relevant and appropriate curriculum. Teachers use a range of teaching and learning strategies to provide higher achieving children with challenge, such as higher order thinking skills, questioning, problem solving and independent learning.

In our school, we give all children the opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do and we achieve this in a variety of ways when planning for children's learning by providing:

- a common activity that allows the children to respond at their own level;
- challenge activities that broaden a child's learning in English and maths;
- activities that reflects a greater depth of understanding and higher level of attainment;
- the opportunity for children to progress through their work at an appropriate rate of learning.

We offer a range of extra-curricular activities for our children. These activities offer children the opportunity to further extend their learning.

Learning is also enriched through regular homework activities linked to the work being undertaken in class. This gives teachers a further opportunity to set work at the level of individual children.

The children will also have the chance to experience a range of educational visits (Wick Court Farm and PGL) that further enrich and develop learning.

Enrichment

Provision (2025-2026)

Provision:	About the provision:	Skills developed:	Outcomes for children:
Storytelling – Hannah Need	Hannah (the storyteller) works with children from Nursery to Year 2. Her work with the children supports and extends the work they are doing in English.	Oral rehearsal, broadening vocabulary, confidence with performing in front of the class, re-telling in own words and creative thinking.	Children develop language and vocabulary, story structure and creative thinking, which they can apply to their writing.
Artis	Children engage in weekly Artis sessions, which link closely to classroom themes and curriculum topics.	Confidence, performing arts, communication, teamwork, creative thinking, reflection, leadership and self-expression.	Children develop a wide range of skills. Develop a growth mindset. Preparation for future learning opportunities. Fostering active and responsible citizenship.

Provision:	About the provision:	Skills developed:	Outcomes for children:
POLKA theatre	Various opportunities throughout the year for all classes through the Polka's Creative Connections programme.	Confidence, performing arts, communication, teamwork, creative thinking, reflection and self-expression.	Children develop a wide range of skills linked to performing.
Spelling Bee (currently in year 6)	Children compete in a friendly yet competitive termly spelling competition.	Spelling skills and confidence.	Children will develop and improve their spelling skills whilst joining in with friendly competition. Children will be rewarded with winner's status and certificates.
School choir	Dedicated and enthusiastic singers meet each week and form a school choir. Opportunities to perform at special events such as: Sing Fest and other school events.	Confidence and public performance. Improved singing skills and team spirit.	Children improve confidence in performing and develop 'performance' mindset. Vocal skills improved.
Musical opportunities with Merton Music Foundation and the wider community.	An example of our collaboration with MMF is the Year 6 'Friday Afternoon Blues' project.	Confidence and public performance. Improved singing skills, ability to play musical instruments and team work.	Children enhance their musical abilities. Children are given the chance to produce a 'final product' and perform to audience.
Year 4 Book club	Year 4 collaborate with Kings College students to form a book club that meets weekly.	Reading skills such as improved fluency, intonation, prosody and comprehension.	A love for reading is developed along with key reading skills being further developed.
King's School and Harris Academy support for Physical Education	Year 1 children have opportunities to develop their PE skills in small groups with pupils from two local secondary schools	PE skills and skills for games; teamwork and competition	Increased skills for games and improved self-confidence.

Provision:	About the provision:	Skills developed:	Outcomes for children:
Various Sporting opportunities through Merton School Sport Partnership	The sporting competitions and festivals for schools run throughout the year, and are inclusive for all levels of ability and sporting ambition.	Confidence, friendly competition and team work.	Children develop their team work skills and a sense of friendly competition when competing against other schools.
PGL	PGL is a residential trip where children take part in various activities from sports to outdoor adventure. Children are 'challenged by choice' and therefore make their own decisions. They receive lots of positive encouragement from the adults!	Character development is at the core of each PGL programme, focusing on confidence, resilience and life skills.	Teamwork and life skills are developed.
Wick Court Residential trip	Wick Court is a residential trip to the farm. During this visit the children work hard: tending to the animals, gathering produce, even providing guided tours for visitors.	Children learn how to take care of the animals.	Responsibility and team work skills are developed.

Policy review and development

The progress of higher achieving children will be monitored at Pupil Progress Meetings and used to inform provision planning. We follow the principles of the Assess – Plan – do – Review cycle, using assessment to inform provision and planning then reviewing progress to once again inform planning and delivery.

Appendix 1 - checklist of characteristics for Higher Achieving children.

Identifying higher achievers

Higher achievers may display a selection of the following characteristics. Children may also exhibit special abilities in one or more areas – and not just in the traditional academic disciplines.

Personal traits:	Learning ability:	Learning styles:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquisitive, curious, alert and responsive to new ideas • Very articulate or verbally fluent for their age • Quick thinkers • Have a wide general knowledge • High self-motivation/initiative; can work well independently • Socially adept • Show leadership qualities • Good sense of humour • Communicate well with adults and peers • Have a good memory • Have strong views and opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new ideas and concepts quickly/easily/readily • Be self-taught in his/her own interest area • Be artist and/or musical • Excel at sport • Good at reasoning/logical/analytical thinking • See relationships between things • Follow complex directions easily • Advanced vocabulary/verbally fluent/good self-expression • Good attention; concentration and persevere for long periods if interested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative/imaginative; original ideas in problem-solving; may be artistic/musical • Dislike repetition of concepts and closed tasks; gets bored easily • Inclined to choose unusual but effective methods of working, perhaps using a different line of logic or jumping steps • Many interests/hobbies; read across a wide range of subjects • Prefer verbal expression; reluctant to record things in writing • Perfectionists; may lean towards being obsessive