

## **SNAPshot No 13- Strategies for meeting the Needs of Highly Able learners**

Jack Knott, Dr Margaret Sutherland and Staff of Ferryhill Primary school 2021



## About this SNAPshot

Meeting the needs of Highly Able learners is a requirement for all schools in Scotland as outlined previously in SNAPshot 8. These three infographics were designed as part of a school-wide policy on identifying and meeting the needs of Highly Able learners at Ferryhill Primary school in Edinburgh.

Whilst by no means an exhaustive list of strategies, the aim was to provide an easy read guide for school staff to assist in their planning and meeting the needs of Highly Able learners.

Some ideas to bear in mind when using these strategies are as follows;

- ✓ Do not use extension in place of progression.
- ✓ Ensure well-maintained dialogue with parents and with the learner.
- ✓ Curriculum Compacting: replacement activities refer to planning and delivering different learning intentions that allow for new learning.
- ✓ As with all learners, Highly Able learners will require different amounts of support and strategies throughout school. As such, strategies should be collaboratively reviewed by the staff, parents and learner.



# Ferryhill Primary



## In-Class Support

Highly Able learners can benefit from various support in class alongside their peers. As with all learners, there is no one size fits all and some may require one or a combination of approaches.

### Reduced instruction, faster Pace.



Highly Able learners may achieve learning intentions and make wider connections between their learning faster than others. As a result, they often require less time and instruction to achieve their intended outcomes.

### Enrichment and Extension:



Broaden learning intentions to allow learners to look more widely and in-depth at a topic. I.e. in the rainforest topic, investigate why deforestation continues and current/potential initiatives to stop it.

### Curriculum Compacting:

- 1 Define the main outcomes of topic
- 2 Determine which outcomes have been met by the learner.
- 3 Provide replacement activities that allow for progression.

### Personal projects:



Allow learners to develop their areas of interest by facilitating personal projects for them. This works best when the projects are scaffolded and open ended (where possible). Time can be allocated in class and also by incorporating it into homework.

### Growth mindset, Mindfulness and Nurture strategies



Evidence shows that these strategies are crucial to Highly Able Learner's health and wellbeing.

### Peer Mentoring



Occasionally asking Highly Able Learners to explain concepts to others can help them feel valued & improve depth of understanding. This shouldn't be a frequently used strategy as it can lead to a hindering Pace & Progression.

### Regular Target setting

Highly Able learners benefit from regular target setting and reviewing of targets with a mentor or teacher.





## Out of Class Strategies

In some cases, learners may require out of class support. This may not need to be physically out of class i.e. it could be provided remotely via TEAMS! These are some suggested strategies that could be employed to meet learner's needs.

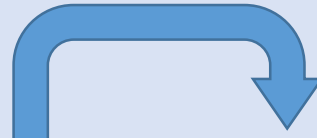
### Mentoring



Arrange for an expert to help guide the learner in their area. Experts can be approached through Secondary schools, university and other organisations. We also have in-school Art, PE and STEM specialists.

### Revolving Door Strategy:

**Join older class**



**Leave class**

**Return to class**

A Highly Able Learner may benefit from joining a higher class for a specific subject. This will give them access to similar peers and help provide an appropriate challenge.

### External Partnerships



Agencies such as Secondary schools or Universities can help to provide support or resources for Highly Able learners. This can be particularly beneficial if the learner has a niche interest i.e. a specific historical period or science.

### Ability Grouping/Pull out groups



Out of class groups can be made where learners are grouped based upon their ability rather than age. This gives Highly Able learners access to similar peers and provides adequate Pace, Challenge and Progression.

### After School clubs



Referring Highly Able learners to after school clubs gives them time to work on their areas of interest, access to experts and interact with similar peers.

### Health and Wellbeing



Highly Able learners may demonstrate heightened emotions, short attention span, perfectionism, sensitivity and intensity as well as other ASNs. Support for learning and Educational Psychologists can help with strategies to help remove these barriers.



## Parental Involvement

As with all children's learning, a positive relationship with parents can be tremendously positive for their development. Here are some suggestions on how to get the most benefit from this relationship for Highly Able learners.

### **Parental nominations**

Parents can give a history of a learners ability or interests. If parents express that their learners may be Highly Able this could also be the starting point for further assessment.

### **Provide parents with checklist prior to initial meeting**

Provide parents with a checklist before meeting. This will help guide the meeting as well as help you ensure traits observed are consistent.

### **Point them towards Scottish Network for Able Pupils (SNAP)**

The SNAP website has guidance, advice and parental support networks that can help parents with Highly Able learners.

### **Maintain dialogue on progress with parents**

Schedule meetings with parents to discuss Highly Able learners progress in school and at home. This can help ensure that targets are met and address any concerns.

### **Advise parents of potential events**

Edinburgh has a lot of events that may benefit Highly Able learners. If you hear of any events that may interest or benefit Highly Able learners let parents know! For example events via Museums, Edinburgh Maths Circle, Universities, Science museum, zoo, authors at bookstores etc.