



Most Able Learners at Fitzwaryn

In response to the recent Ofsted report when the inspector stated that ‘some parents raised concerns about whether the most able pupils receive enough challenge’ I wanted to share the school’s view of the ‘most able learners’ for clarification.

According to research there is no national definition of a ‘most able learner’; this is entirely dependent on the school and its individual context.

At Fitzwaryn we are committed to ensuring that every child and young adult should be given an equal and fair chance and the education that we provide encourages pupils at all levels in a safe environment to reach their full potential in partnership with parents and carers. We recognise children as individuals with unique personalities, skills and abilities.

The curriculum at Fitzwaryn is designed to be tailored to the differing needs of the pupils and progress is both internally and externally monitored on an individual pupil basis, ensuring that pupils achieve against their individually set targets.

A range of evidence is gathered that informs our assessments of a pupil’s ability including:

- Day to day teacher assessments and observations
- Evidence gathered from external agencies at EHCP review e.g. SALT, OT, Physiotherapy
- Information from previous school on transition
- Information from parents and carers
- Performance against external accreditations

Provision

Each teacher sets high expectations for all of the pupils in their class and in the groups that they teach. Individual curriculum targets are set for all pupils and progress is tracked carefully to ensure that the pupils are reaching their potential within these curriculum areas.

Effective **differentiation** is evident in all lessons (matching teaching and learning to the relevant needs and abilities of the pupils). **Extension** work is a key aspect of the curriculum offer where teachers recognise and plan for additional challenges to those pupils who need or request it within the curriculum delivery. We believe that our curriculum delivers effective **enrichment** opportunities to enable the pupils to learn more about a particular subject e.g. the Shakespeare for Schools annual project. Further **challenges** may be set during lessons or at other times including work to carry out at home or within the homework booklet that can be found on the website.

Our wide and diverse curriculum also provides opportunities for pupils to engage in activities that they can excel in e.g. our runners are invited to Oxford Town and

Gown event; our swimmers compete alongside their mainstream partners in swimming galas; our expert gardeners take care of the horticulture area; our wonderful cooks are asked to provide the weekly takeaway enterprise, bake their delicious cakes for coffee mornings and our best actors and singers are chosen to perform in external events such as Shakespeare plays and choir events. We also offer many opportunities for some of our pupils to push themselves beyond their comfort zones or engage in activities that they would not normally have the opportunity of experiencing e.g. a zip wire/climbing wall on a residential trip, travelling on the underground in London.

In addition, we endeavour to hold the widest possible view of ability but we also encourage and celebrate children who, for example, are particularly good at helping others, at cooperating, showing respect which are linked to our School Values; all of which are celebrated appropriately. We encourage pupils, where appropriate, to take on specific roles around school thus contributing to the smooth running of the establishment; placing chairs for assembly in the hall, feeding the fish, ensuring the PE equipment is available on the playground, reading to the younger children, keeping the Early Years garden tidy.

We aim to create an ethos where pupils feel good about achieving excellence and both achievement and effort are celebrated. Linked to the vision of the school; 'learning to learn to access society', is the constant drive for pupils to become independent learners and citizens. We encourage all of our pupils to learn to look after themselves and each other whilst they learn to be independent in the classroom and around school.

At the annual EHCP review meetings we will always consider whether the school is still meeting the needs of the pupils and ask that parents are involved in setting objectives for their child's future. We will then work towards these objectives during the year via the curriculum and the setting of IEP targets.

We try and meet expectations and will strive to enable each and every pupil to reach their goals. If we can add anything into the individual offer, we will endeavour to do so; for example, if we felt that a programme of integration into a mainstream class is applicable for a particular subject to further enhance learning then we will arrange for that to happen, resourcing allowing.

We review the qualifications on offer at Fitzwaryn regularly and ensure that they are matched to the needs of the cohort of learners. You can find more information about this on our website:

<https://www.fitzwaryn.oxon.sch.uk/page/?title=Accreditation&pid=26>

If you would like to discuss this further or feel that your child is not sufficiently challenged, please make an appointment with your child's class teacher in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Coneboy
Headteacher