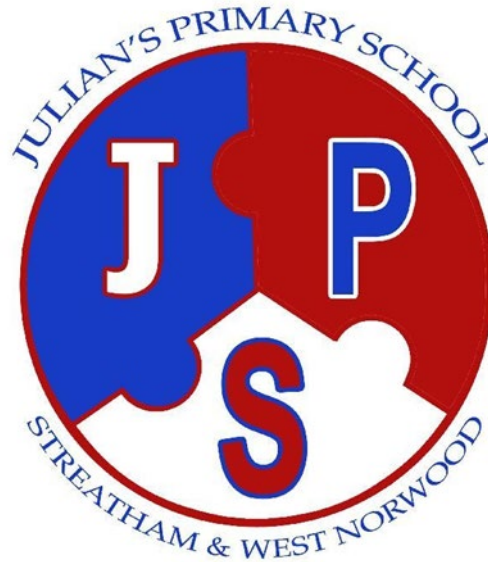


JULIAN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Higher Attaining Policy



RESPECT

INTEGRITY

CREATIVITY

EXCELLENCE

RESILIENCE

Rationale

At Julian's Primary School, we are committed to delivering a challenging and enriching curriculum that enables every pupil to reach their full potential. We believe that high expectations and aspirational learning opportunities should be accessible to all, including those pupils who are higher attaining.

We recognise that the identification and support of our highest attaining pupils is essential, not only for their individual development but also for fostering a culture of excellence throughout the school. By planning high-quality, tailored provision for these learners, we elevate the overall standard of teaching and learning, benefiting all pupils.

This policy aims to ensure that the needs of our highest attaining pupils are clearly identified and effectively met. We are committed to stretching these learners intellectually, emotionally, socially, physically, and creatively—providing opportunities that both challenge and inspire them to excel.

Aims

- To foster a culture of high expectations, where all pupils are encouraged to aim for excellence in their learning and personal development.
- To promote a metacognition and oracy approach that nurtures resilience, perseverance, and a belief that effort leads to improvement and success.
- To ensure that adaptive teaching and appropriate challenge are embedded across the curriculum through high-quality, inclusive, and responsive classroom practice.
- To actively identify higher attaining pupils using a range of strategies, including ongoing assessment, observation, and consultation with stakeholders.
- To enable all higher attaining pupils to achieve their full potential—academically, socially, and emotionally—within and beyond the classroom.
- To provide rich opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to deepen their knowledge, express creativity, develop talents, and enhance reasoning, metacognitive, and evaluative thinking skills.
- To work in partnership with parents, carers, and the wider school community to recognise and nurture the diverse gifts, talents, and abilities of all pupils.

Definitions

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At Julian's Primary School, we use the term **Higher Attaining Pupils** to refer to children who are achieving significantly above age-related expectations in one or more areas of the curriculum. These pupils demonstrate high levels of attainment relative to their peers and require planned opportunities for additional challenge, enrichment, and depth of learning in order to continue making progress.

We have purposefully moved away from using the terms "gifted," "talented," and "most able" to reflect current educational thinking, which emphasises the importance of recognising demonstrated attainment rather than assuming fixed or innate ability. The term higher attaining supports a more inclusive and dynamic understanding of pupil progress, acknowledging that attainment can develop over time through high-quality teaching, appropriate support, and a culture that values resilience and effort.

This terminology aligns with our commitment to promoting a **Metacognitive** approach and reflects our school values of aiming for excellence and being resilient in all that we do. By focusing on attainment, we ensure that our provision is informed by evidence and responsive to the needs of all learners, rather than being limited by static labels.

Dual or Multiple Exceptionality

We recognise that some pupils may be both higher attaining and have identified special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are described as having **dual or multiple exceptionality (DME)**. It is essential that their strengths are nurtured while ensuring that any barriers to learning are addressed through tailored provision that supports both challenge and access.

Identification of Higher Attaining Pupils

As outlined by the **National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)**, "Identification is a complex matter and is a whole-school issue which should be discussed and agreed by all staff." At Julian's Primary School, we recognise that the identification of higher attaining pupils must be robust, inclusive, and ongoing. It is not a one-off event, nor solely based on academic data. Our approach reflects our belief that all pupils are capable of growth and that attainment can emerge at different stages and in a variety of contexts.

We are committed to ensuring that identification:

- Is equitable and free from bias, including gender, cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic bias.
- Considers a broad range of indicators, not limited to traditional academic measures.
- Is revisited regularly to ensure responsiveness to pupil development over time.

We aim to identify higher attaining pupils through a combination of the following:

- **Analysis of summative assessments and tracking data:** Standardised test results and teacher-assessed attainment will be reviewed termly to highlight pupils exceeding age-

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related expectations in one or more subjects.

- **Formative assessment and professional judgement:** Teachers' knowledge of pupils, including classroom performance, depth of questioning, creativity, independence, and problem-solving skills, informs the identification process.
- **Observational evidence:** Teachers and support staff continuously observe pupils' engagement, resilience, and ability to make connections across learning.
- **Specialist input:** Information from specialist teachers, such as those in music, art, or physical education, is used to identify pupils excelling in particular domains.
- **Pupil voice:** Conversations with pupils, including their aspirations, self-reflection, and engagement with challenge, provide valuable insight into their learning strengths.
- **Wider opportunities and performance:** Participation and success in enrichment opportunities (e.g. competitions, performances, extracurricular activities) can highlight talents that may not be evident in classroom settings.

This multi-faceted approach ensures a broader, fairer, and more accurate picture of a pupil's current attainment and potential. Identification is considered a starting point for provision, not a label, and remains flexible as pupils grow and develop.

Characteristics of Higher Attaining Pupils

Higher attaining pupils are not a homogenous group; their strengths and achievements can present in many different ways. They are more likely than their peers to:

- Think quickly, reason logically, and work independently
- Generate creative ideas and solutions
- Apply knowledge and skills flexibly in unfamiliar contexts
- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Show curiosity, perseverance, and attention to detail
- Demonstrate high levels of attainment in one or more areas of the curriculum
- Exhibit creativity, empathy, leadership, or teamwork skills
- Show enthusiasm or passion for specific subjects or activities
- Display advanced mastery of curriculum content

It is important to note that not all higher attaining pupils are high achievers. Some may underperform due to barriers such as low self-esteem, lack of appropriate challenge, or

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additional learning needs. At Julian's Primary School, we are committed to recognising both demonstrated attainment and potential, ensuring that all pupils—particularly those at risk of underachievement—are given the opportunity to succeed.

Provision

At Julian's Primary School, we provide an enriching and inclusive curriculum that is adapted to meet the needs of all learners, including higher attaining pupils. We recognise that abilities may emerge over time and in response to varied opportunities, so our provision remains flexible, responsive, and child-centred.

Teachers differentiate learning to ensure appropriate challenge for all pupils and are supported in this by key staff including **Subject Leaders**, **Phase Leaders**, the **Inclusion Team**, and **Deputy Heads of School**. Provision for higher attaining pupils is personalised and may involve collaboration with parents, external agencies, and support staff, especially in cases of dual or multiple exceptionality.

We place a strong emphasis on developing **metacognition** and **oracy** across the curriculum. Pupils are supported to reflect on their own learning, make purposeful choices, and articulate their thinking clearly and confidently. These approaches help to deepen understanding, improve learning behaviours, and remove barriers to achievement—ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to excel.

NACE Accreditation

Julian's Primary School has been accredited by the **National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE)** since 2016, with our most recent re-accreditation awarded in **June 2024**. This accreditation reflects our ongoing commitment to high-quality provision for higher attaining pupils. As part of the process, NACE carries out a rigorous review of our practice and sets interim targets, which are reviewed every three years. This ensures that we remain responsive to developments in educational research and continue to refine our approach in line with national best practice.

NACE encourages schools to tailor their provision based on a range of key strategies that support and challenge higher attaining pupils. At Julian's, we incorporate the following approaches into our teaching and learning:

- Rich and purposeful questioning
- Higher-order and abstract thinking, including the ability to handle ambiguity and paradox
- Problem solving and enquiry-based learning
- Development of advanced language skills, including accuracy, precision, and fluency
- Opportunities for independent learning and self-directed study

- Promotion of **metacognitive** strategies to support reflective thinking
 - Encouragement of cross-disciplinary thinking and knowledge transfer
 - Leadership development and pupil voice opportunities
 - Broad curriculum enrichment to extend and deepen learning
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Leadership and Monitoring

The implementation and coordination of this policy is overseen by the **Phase Leaders**, who work in close partnership with **Subject Leaders**, the **Inclusion Team**, and **Senior Leadership**. Phase Leaders are responsible for:

- Sharing effective practice across year groups
 - Identifying staff training needs and supporting professional development
 - Ensuring appropriate resources and planning tools are in place
 - Facilitating collaboration between staff and external partners
 - Monitoring and evaluating the impact of provision for higher attaining pupils
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Parents and Carers

All school policies, including this one, are available to parents and carers via the school website or upon request. While we do not maintain a formal register of higher attaining pupils, nor routinely notify parents or carers of this classification, we maintain regular dialogue through parent consultations and meetings. Where appropriate, families are signposted to relevant external agencies or enrichment opportunities to support their child's development.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment of pupils is continuous and includes both formal and informal methods. Teachers and support staff regularly assess attainment and progress through classroom observation, formative assessment, and summative data. Feedback from teaching assistants, external specialists, and parents/carers—particularly during open evenings—also informs our understanding of each child's learning profile. Where appropriate, pupils identified as requiring additional challenge are provided with adapted provision in line with their current attainment.

Monitoring

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Provision for higher attaining pupils is monitored through a range of approaches:

- **Identification:** Ongoing through tracking, data analysis, and pupil progress meetings
 - **Teaching and Learning:** Evaluation of classroom adaptation, flexible groupings, and challenge in planning
 - **Provision:** Review of opportunities for enrichment, depth, and breadth within the curriculum
 - **Pupil Wellbeing:** Consideration of pastoral, motivational, and social needs, particularly for those at risk of underachievement
 - **Pupil Voice:** Involving pupils in discussing their learning, goals, and areas for development
 - **Tracking Tools:** Use of progress matrices and assessment data to monitor development over time
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Success Criteria

The success of this policy will be evident when:

- Higher attaining pupils are effectively identified and monitored through a range of evidence
 - Challenging and enriching activities are embedded across the curriculum and offered at a whole-school level
 - Pupils feel supported, motivated, and understood, both academically and pastorally
 - Staff demonstrate confidence in identifying, planning for, and supporting higher attaining pupils
 - Pupil progress is sustained, and the trajectory of achievement for higher attaining pupils remains upward
 - Provision helps to raise expectations and standards across the school
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Evaluation

Evaluation of this policy and its implementation will be led by the **Senior Leadership Team** in collaboration with the **Inclusion Lead Governor**. The success criteria outlined above will be used to assess impact and guide future development of provision for higher attaining pupils.

Reviewed May 2025
Geraldine Bibby and Lawrence Anderson