

Meeting the Needs of All Learners

A Policy for Differentiation



At Trent CE Primary School we recognise that each class is made up of individuals with different aptitudes, skills and knowledge. To bring out the very best in every child, a number of adaptations are made during lessons to personalise the learning experience. This is often referred to as 'differentiating'

The rationale for differentiation at Trent CE Primary School

- To make teaching and learning more effective, enabling rapid progress for every child
- To make clear the high expectations teachers have of each pupil
- To cater for individual interests and abilities;
- To ensure pupil achievement and success;
- To enhance individual capabilities, strengths and interests;
- To enable more accurate assessment of pupils' learning, driving sharply focused interventions
- To identify barriers to learning, specific needs and gaps in learning;
- To better match pupil to task, taking into account their prior learning;
- To enable children to progress at their own pace;
- To engage, motivate and challenge learners, building their confidence and ability to risk-take
- To engage pupils in the evaluation of their own learning, reflecting on their success and identifying their next steps

Effective differentiation looks like:

- Teachers' planning and records focussed on the needs of individuals and groups within the class. They ensure equal opportunity for every child to have the attention of an adult at some point in the week.
- Lessons have a 'tiered' learning intention available to all children but pitched to ensure success and challenge for every child.
- High quality daily marking requires each child to reflect on their learning from the previous lesson and to respond by either correction, consolidation or challenge depending on their understanding.
- Pupils working independently with autonomy; they are involved, well-motivated and on task;
- Pupils working in a variety of ways, and on a variety of tasks, which varies over time;
- The classroom is organised in an appropriate way for the lesson which varies over time;
- Teachers and TAs regularly offer individual support, or work in a sustained manner with a focus group;
- Pupils are involved in negotiating their work, especially when responding to marking and feedback;
- Children presenting their work in a variety of ways including written, recorded and 3D responses;
- A variety of assessment techniques are in use, notably high quality, probing questions from the teacher;
- Pupils leading learning by asking their own questions leading to thought-provoking discussion;
- The teacher and TA adopting a variety of roles to promote learning;
- Co-operative learning taking place; pupils working together; pupils teaching each other;
- Additional teachers are allocated to specific classes or subjects to enable smaller teaching groups
- A range of appropriate resources in evidence, including
 - texts well suited to the differing levels of ability within the class;
 - alternative texts and/or scaffolded worksheets to support children getting down to learning quickly, removing barriers to achieving the learning intention;
 - Use of IT including listening stations, laptops and iPads;
 - Physical aids, such as 'the bobby cushion' to build core strength

Some strategies for:

Initiative and Independence

- Opportunities for mixed ability and similar ability groupings within the week
- TAs encourage pupils to be independent by asking questions
- Every pupil, in turn, takes on a leadership role in group work
- Opportunities for choice, especially in the outcome of learning
- A range of tasks over time requiring different skills
- Computer-based learning eg MyMaths happens in school and at home

Leading learning

- Pre-learning activities for less confident learners allows them to lead aspects of the whole class lesson (eg research in topic work presented as a short film, powerpoint, poster or dramatization to the class)
- Peer mentoring across abilities, including reading 'buddies' and playground partners
- Class assemblies to parents
- Class Open Days to share projects

Research and Investigation

- Pre-selected websites available on iPads and laptops
- Reference books and artefacts carefully selected to support learners in finding information quickly
- Key information 'tagged' or highlighted in texts for some children; more complex information provided for others
- Information presented in a variety of ways

Creativity

- Choice to work individually or in collaboration
- Pupils encouraged to pursue things that interest them – including learning that happens outside school
- Visual and active responses encouraged: mindmaps, comic strips, drama, role play
- Practical materials readily available
- Templates, of increasing complexity, to record ideas allow learners to structure thinking and focus on the content
- Pupils creating study aids, glossaries, contents pages etc

Difficulty and Complexity

- Some tasks simplified, information supplied clearly or broken down into small, hierarchical steps
- Some tasks have more complex 'real life' contexts
- Pupils required to
 - analyse, classify and collate new ideas
 - simplify, summarise or generalise new information
 - apply and extrapolate using prediction and imagination
- Some tasks start challenging and those who 'get it' then work independently
- A peel-off teaching model used : a quick basic input allows able learners to not waste time hearing things they already know –they are sent off with a challenge; teacher continues in more depth and middle learners then start their task; the learning is simplified and re-framed once again for the lower attaining

Pace and Perseverance

- Adjust the pace but the same expectation
- Personal time goals
- Planning a longer project with a work plan and mini-deadlines
- Children experience times when 'the going gets tough' and work through
- Tell learners what they are expected to achieve that lesson (give them a challenge)
- Encourage perseverance (without taking over through descriptive feedback and timely , encouraging interventions.