

**Swindon Local Authority
Children's Services**

Policy for the education of gifted, more able and talented pupils

Discovering talent, releasing potential, developing expertise

November 2006

Purpose of the policy

The Swindon policy for gifted, more able and talented pupils forms part of the borough's commitment to high quality educational provision for all learners.

The Borough Council is committed to raising standards in the five areas of the Every Child Matters agenda and in all direct aspects of pupils' development. All pupils should be given opportunities to achieve the outcomes that are key to well-being in childhood and later life. All pupils should be entitled to opportunities, which enable them to maximise their potential, achieve success in their work and relationships, and encourage them to value their own and others' achievements.

The purpose of this policy is to secure an agreed framework with schools for the effective educational provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils in Swindon. It is based on national guidance, research and best practice found in Swindon and nationally.

Definition

Provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils is based on the notion that **expertise** should be the end product whether it be in academic areas (giftedness), arts and physical areas (talent) or in social and leadership areas (more able). High achievement can be manifested across a range of multiple abilities and results from contextual factors including potential, motivation, opportunities and support.

**potential + opportunities + motivation = high achievement & expertise
+ support**

Gifted, more able and talented pupils are here defined as '**pupils who have ability or abilities, including potential abilities, beyond that of the large majority of their peer group, and who consequently require a more challenging curriculum than that appropriate for the large majority.**'

Schools are encouraged to use this definition to identify for themselves their gifted, more able and talented pupils across the full range of abilities with regard to the full range of the multiple intelligence spectrum.

Provision

Provision should include some activities designed to meet the needs of the designated cohort plus an overall climate of high expectation and extended provision that will help other pupils to find and reveal their abilities.

Expertise is developed by enhancing the educational opportunities within the curriculum and out of hours study using a mixture of:

Breadth (enrichment)

Depth (extension)

Pace (acceleration)

The role of the local authority

The local authority's responsibility to promote high standards includes ensuring that the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils are met. To fulfil this responsibility, the local authority will:

- Establish a policy on the education of gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Monitor its implementation and the impact of the policy on practice and standards
- Review the policy at regular intervals
- Ensure that the policy is made available to all relevant partners in the education of gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Facilitate sharing of best practice between schools
- Facilitate networking at local, national and international levels and support existing and emerging networks

In addition, the local authority will:

- Identify and monitor the provision available within Swindon, in local authority maintained schools and in other local institutions
- Give advice and support to teachers and parents and carers in gaining access to this provision.

To support schools in meeting the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils, the local authority will:

- Provide relevant information to schools to encourage them to offer appropriate challenges to gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Provide information and advice on school leadership and management, curriculum, pedagogy and transition in relation to gifted, more able and talented pupils, and disseminate best practice
- Enhance the provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils through joint work with schools and partnerships with other groups and providers.

To secure high standards in schools, the local authority will

- Identify and promote improvements in schools which are making inadequate provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Support the development of school self-evaluation that leads to improvements for pupils, for example, the use of the NACE Challenge Award or the DFES Quality Standards
- Promote the effective and efficient use of resources to meet the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Encourage, support and facilitate local initiatives, including
 - Links with universities and institutions of higher education
 - Links with the community, business and industry

- Monitor and evaluate the provision made for gifted, more able and talented pupils in schools through analyses of:
 - School self evaluation and best value review data
 - OFSTED reports
 - Visits to schools by members of the Children's Service, including lesson observations where appropriate
 - Attainment and contextual value added data
 - Notes of visit to headteachers and chairs of governors
 - In-service course evaluations
 - Evaluation reports of specific curricular support events
 - Participation in local learning networks and professional development events.

To ensure that the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils from minority groups are met, the local education authority will:

- Promote arrangements for identification and assessment of needs, and subsequent provision, that are equally accessible to pupils who are
 - Educated in mainstream schools
 - Educated otherwise than at school
 - From minority ethnic groups
 - Travellers
 - In public care
 - Have special educational needs.

The role of the school

Each school is required to ensure that the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils are met, and are expected to:

- Analyse attainment data, including performance criteria in sport, PE and the creative arts, in order to identify its gifted, more able and talented pupils and those pupils who have the potential to reach high levels of performance
- Through robust school self-evaluation be alert to particular groups of pupils who may be underachieving and to assess the potential ability of these pupils
- Have a named person responsible for the co-ordination of the school's policy and provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Ensure that the school has a policy outlining how the school will implement and monitor provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils and that is linked to the school improvement plan
- Establish procedures for identifying gifted, more able and talented pupils which are transparent, non-discriminatory, flexible and effective
- Ensure pupils' achievements match their potential ability, taking into account the schools' performance data as well as information from its own pupil tracking
- Be confident that particular groups of pupils are not under-represented in the cohort of gifted, more able and talented pupils

- Promote an atmosphere of inclusiveness where any negative stereotyped generalisations about gifted, more able and talented pupils are challenged
- Ensure its curriculum and wider-schooling opportunities meet the needs of gifted, more able and talented pupils
- Monitor the outcomes and track the progress of gifted, more able and talented pupils, taking appropriate and effective action to promote the interests of these pupils, including providing training for staff as well as support for pupils and their parents to plan their learning and develop further their talents and experiences
- Ensure that provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils is embedded in all aspects of school life
- Support the effective transition of gifted, more able and talented pupils to the next stage of education or to employment

The role of the school's Governing Body

School governors have a large part to play in the monitoring of a school policy for gifted, more able and talented pupils. Working with the head teacher and staff, they can help to ensure that the policy fits the particular ethos of their school. Schools should have a named member of the governing body who is responsible for gifted, more able and talented education.

Governors can help to ensure that parents and carers are well informed about the policy and engage their support. They may be a useful resource in establishing links throughout the community.

Governors should decide:

- What type and level of monitoring of the policy is appropriate in their school
- Ensure that the monitoring is implemented appropriately
- Evaluate the impact of the policy, and
- Ensure that the school's policy is linked with the school improvement plan and related budget.

They should be aware of the possible implications for extra funding for staffing, new resources, non-contact time and staff training. The governing body should try to increase its knowledge in this area, by arranging for one or two governors to attend relevant governor training when available.

The local authority will support governing bodies by:

- Providing training opportunities and support for school governors to develop their understanding about identification and provision for gifted, more able and talented pupils, and on developing, implementing and monitoring a school policy.

Partnership with parents and carers

Parents and carers and schools working together can significantly enhance a child's experience of education, through

- Effective identification and assessment of strengths and needs, especially when starting a new school
- Sharing high but realistic expectations of further success
- Agreeing on the need for a broad and balanced curriculum which provides challenge in relevant areas but avoids the undue pressure that comes from an expectation of high ability in everything all the time
- Recognising together that learning to learn and the enjoyment of learning are as important as passing tests and examinations
- Building on the experiences provided by each other
- Sharing successes and concerns.

Effective partnership will be based on the development of trust, and on each partner valuing the other.

Monitoring the policy

The local authority will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy annually, through

- Analysis of the progress of high attaining pupils in National Curriculum tests and accredited examinations
- Validating school self review
- Review of school OFSTED inspection reports
- Analysis of any parental concerns or complaints about provision
- Additions to the range of provision made within the authority
- Reviewing the range and quality of in-service training opportunities offered to schools
- The application of the principles of best value and through specific best value reviews.

The Director for Quality Standards and the adviser with lead responsibility for gifted, more able and talented pupils will provide an annual report in January to:

- The Director of Children Services
- The Children's Overview Committee as part of the report on school standards

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More Able and Talented Pupils