

Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Pupils for the Wigan Children and Young People's Service

POLICY STATEMENT

The Wigan Children and Young People Service (CYPS) policy for able gifted and talented pupils forms part of its commitment to support and facilitate inclusive high quality educational provision for all learners.

Able, gifted and talented pupils are here defined as pupils who display patterns of learning strengths, preferences and abilities in one or more area including those with abilities beyond the majority of their peer group. DfES guidance formulated as part of the Excellence in Cities programme, states that all schools are expected to identify 5 – 10% of pupils as able gifted or talented. The identification strategy advocated by Wigan CYPS will mean that the percentage of pupils identified may be higher.

The Council is committed to raising standards in all aspects of children's development within an ethos of excellence for all. All children and young people should be entitled to access 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.

All schools have able, gifted and talented pupils. DfES guidance for Excellence in Cities (EiC) described planned action to improve the attainment of the most able 5 – 10% in any school. This is a good starting point, however the number of pupils in any one school will always be relative, and therefore determined by the initial definition a school chooses to adopt. Schools are encouraged to recognise the extent and the pool of young people with ability and talent and also that ability and talent may change over time. Appropriate challenge, support and motivation will do much to maximise the potential of a wider range of young people and tackle the underachievement of some more able pupils.

The Council is committed to creating opportunities to enable those to flourish, whose potential to excel has not yet been recognised. Wigan Council is committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Whilst all pupils have special gifts and talents that should be valued and promoted, pupils with exceptional strengths should receive a curriculum which meets their needs. This is a recognition that sometimes particular groups of pupils have been under represented in the identification of able, gifted and talented pupils.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY DOCUMENT

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide and outline Wigan's CYPS policy and initial guidelines for the education of able, gifted and talented pupils
- 1.2 The policy should be read in conjunction with Wigan Councils Education Development Plan 2002 – 2007 and against the developing context of the Children and Young Peoples Services.
- 1.3 The policy aims to express a clear rationale and vision for the education of pupils and facilitate the provision of high quality learning experiences for all children and young people in a variety of contexts and learning environments.

2. POLICY AIMS

- 2.1 The Council's CYPS policy for able, gifted and talented pupils, aims to support schools in their work, so that schools and teachers are better able to:
 - provide support for pupils with outstanding gifts and talents in the mainstream classroom;
 - recognise that pupils can have outstanding gifts and talents that are not only academic;
 - use performance data to track pupil progress and to set challenging targets which will improve future achievement;
 - understand the current requirements and areas for inspection in terms of the provision of teaching and learning to meet the needs of able, gifted and talented pupils;
 - create a climate for learning, and an ethos throughout the school, which encourages pupils to excel and celebrate diversity;
 - use a range of suitable identification and assessment procedures to ensure that the needs of more able pupils are recognised, understood and met;
 - develop strategies to meet the pupil's needs through the provision of a differentiated, extended and enriched curriculum, and through leadership and organisational arrangements which support the pupil's learning and development;
 - recognise and address under-achievement and thereby raise the levels of achievement and potential of all pupils;
 - make creative use of the wider community in enhancing pupils' learning opportunities;
 - work in partnership with parents and carers to help promote pupils' learning and development.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 The LA Council, it's CYPS and it's schools believe that:

- all schools can make a significant difference in enabling more able pupils to achieve their best;
- ability and talent is manifest in a variety of ways through intellectual, academic, physical, practical, creative and social fields of human activity;
- the most effective ways of making provision for more able pupils in school is through a broad and balanced curriculum which:
 - offers a stimulating, challenging and differentiated experience for learning; succeeds in developing an interest in learning and valuing achievement for all; takes account of pupils' individual learning needs, as well as their personal and social development.
- pupils should be educated with their age group. However, in exceptional circumstances, when a child is performing at a significantly higher level, then opportunities to accelerate alongside older pupils should be considered.
- there is no one best way to provide for more able pupils. Schools are, therefore, encouraged to interpret this policy flexibly in order to accommodate individual needs and circumstances.

3.2 In accordance with the SEN Revised Code of Practice, the LA does not consider that high ability, in itself, constitutes a special educational need.

However:

- gifted, more able and talented pupils may have special needs;
- special needs pupils may be gifted, more able and/or talented;
- emotional and behavioural difficulties may mask ability and /or talent;
- in rare circumstances, emotional and behavioural difficulties may be a manifestation of exceptional gifts.

3.3 Schools are therefore encouraged:

- to keep an open mind as to who are the most able;

- to ensure that the identification of and provision for, these pupils is inclusive and exclusive;
- to pursue gifted and talented provision as a matter of entitlement and not as elitist;
- to recognise that ability is not fixed, but can change over time in response to a variety of factors not least the opportunities and quality of the learning experience and environment;
- to recognise and expand the pool of talent;
- where possible to involve pupils actively in reviewing and developing provision.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Role of Schools

In order to realise these aims the LA CYPS will encourage schools to:

- develop a whole school policy on provision for gifted , more able and talented pupils;
- establish manageable systems and strategies to enable teachers to recognise pupils who perform, or who have the potential to perform, at a level well above their peers;
- develop teaching and learning strategies which provide more able pupils with an appropriate level of challenge;
- develop the range of learning respond flexibly to individual needs by providing opportunities for pupil to work in various contexts, including working from time to time with pupils of similar ability
- raise awareness amongst staff of the implications for certain children of being gifted, more able and/or talented, and ensure that systems ate in place to provide them with personal and educational support and guidance.
- develop teachers' confidence and skills in making provision for more able pupils, by providing them with suitable professional development opportunities.
- give pupils the opportunity to express their views on the provision for able, gifted and talented pupils.
- explore opportunities beyond the school, through links with other schools and colleges, with community groups, local people, business and industry, so as to broaden and enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that their views and concerns are taken into account in planning and making arrangements for their child.

- nominate a teacher responsible for able pupils to develop and co-ordinate the school's policy and provision and to monitor pupils' progress. Representation at Senior Management nominate a governor with responsibility for more able pupils.
- use progress and performance data to track, monitor and evaluate the progress of able, gifted and talented pupils within and across key stages.

4.2 **The main roles and responsibilities of the LA CYPS**

The CYPS of the LA will aim to:

- work in partnership with schools.
- appoint a School Improvement Adviser whose role includes taking lead responsibility for the gifted and talented strategy at a local level.
- give guidance and support to schools on relevant issues and strategies.
- encourage schools to share expertise and experience through local networking, subject leader networks and other professional activities.
- disseminate self-evaluation strategies to empower schools to develop action plans for able, gifted and talented provision.
- support effective communication with parents including an CYPS helpline.
- ensure that the advisory team members are aware of relevant issues and the need to develop this area.
- develop a website for the CYPS to share good practice and guidance on provision.
- provide training opportunities for school co-ordinators and other staff.

5. **RATIONALE FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**

- 5.1 In arguing for a co-ordinated approach to educating able, gifted and talented pupils Dr Deborah Eyre, the Director of the National Academy for Gifted Youth, states:

“Traditionally gifted and talented education has been seen as divorced from the general education system, yet if a country's education system seeks to provide appropriate education for all its children, then the education of the most able (gifted) should be seen as just one part of a larger whole. This, in itself, should provide a compelling case for a nationally coherent and integrated approach to the education of the gifted. However, there are reasons that transcend education policy that suggest that a country would be well-advised to give gifted education a more central location. Today's gifted pupils are tomorrow's social, intellectual, economic and cultural leaders and their development cannot be left to chance. Where it is left to chance, evidence from England and elsewhere indicates that educational progress is not so much a question of intellectual merit but rather a question of affluence, with the most affluent receiving the best education and therefore achieving most highly. This suggests significant intellectual ability being untapped and unnoticed. Finally education research in England suggests that where schools integrate provision for the gifted and able as part of their overall provision, general education standards rise”.

5.2 The overriding message for schools is that:

- School based provision must be planned, wide ranging and systematically monitored.
- Whole school approaches must recognise the diversity in the group and provide flexibility of provision
- The most effective provision comes through a curriculum focused approach

6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE LEA POLICY

6.1 The Council policy and support for schools will be monitored and evaluated through:

- analysing pupil and school performance through the monitoring and evaluation procedures identified in 5.2 of the policy;
- targeted reviews of provision for more able pupils;
- reviewing the range and quality of in-service training opportunities offered to schools;
- the application of the principles of best value.

6.2.1 The Assistant Director School Improvement, and /or the Adviser for Able Gifted and Talented will report as required to:

- ◆ The Director of CYPS
- ◆ Elected members
- ◆ School Improvement Advisers.

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