



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

# Supplementary guidance: more able and talented learners

## September 2013



**The purpose of Estyn is to inspect quality and standards in education and training in Wales. Estyn is responsible for inspecting:**

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- ▲ primary schools;
- ▲ secondary schools;
- ▲ special schools;
- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community learning;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ local authority education services for children and young people;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning.

Estyn also:

- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the Welsh Government and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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**What is the purpose?**

To provide guidance to inspectors for evaluating standards and provision for more able and talented learners aged 3 to 19 years of age in Wales when it is a line of enquiry.

**For whom is it intended?**

All inspectors of maintained schools.

**From when should the guidance be used?**

From September 2010.

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## 1 Introduction

The Welsh Assembly Government aims for all learners to have the best start in life with opportunities and encouragement to achieve their full learning potential. In May, 2008, the Welsh Assembly Government published a set of Quality Standards<sup>1</sup> to support schools and local authorities to meet the needs of more able and talented learners.

There is no universally-agreed definition of learners who generally would be recognised as more able. In Wales, the term 'more able and talented' encompasses approximately 20% of the total school population, and is used to describe learners who require opportunities for enrichment and extension that go beyond those provided for the general cohort of learners.

The term 'more able and talented' includes learners who are more able across subjects within the curriculum as well as those who show talent in one or more specific areas, which could include practical, creative and social fields of human activity.

The identification of more able and talented learners is linked to their context, regardless of how these learners compare to more able and talented learners in other schools. In every school, therefore, you should expect to find a group of learners identified as more able and talented as well as suitable provision for their development through the breadth and depth of their learning experiences and activities. Providing an enriched curriculum can improve the quality of learning and raise standards for learners of all abilities and talents, giving them opportunities and encouragement to achieve their full learning potential.

This supplementary guidance links to Estyn's common inspection framework and the guidance handbooks for each sector.

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting the Challenge Guidance Circular No: 006/2008 Welsh Assembly Government.

## **2 Evaluating standards and provision for more able and talented learners**

This guidance gives questions for inspectors to consider when evaluating the standards and provision for more able and talented learners. The questions are related to the three key questions of the common inspection framework<sup>2</sup>.

### **Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?**

#### **1.1 Standards**

- Do more able and talented learners achieve what is expected of them from baseline and prior attainment data?
- Are the standards reached by more able and talented learners appropriate to their abilities?
- What are the trends in performance at the higher levels in National Curriculum assessments on the separate core subjects and at the higher grades in external examinations?

#### **1.2 Wellbeing**

- What are attitudes to learning of the more able and talented, are they interested in their work, and how well do they engage in tasks?

### **Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

#### **2.1 Learning experiences**

- How does the school organise its provision for more able and talented learners? Is the provision flexible and challenging enough to meet the needs of more able and talented learners?
- Does the school give enough attention to all groups of more able and talented learners, including those who are disadvantaged, have disabilities and from minority ethnic groups?
- Is the identification of more able and talented learners a flexible and continuous process involving a range of strategies?
- Does the provision include enrichment and extension in class as well as opportunities for out-of-school learning?

#### **2.2 Teaching**

- How well do teachers take account of learners' differing abilities and learning needs?
- Do teachers provide opportunities to develop higher-order learning skills, problem-solving and thinking skills in their planning and teaching?
- Do teachers avoid approaches that rely on these learners being required to do more of the same work or low-level extension work such as puzzles and quizzes?

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<sup>2</sup> Common Inspection Framework 2010

- Are teachers aware that issues such as disaffection may mask high ability and that a learner's particular strengths can lie in unconventional areas of development?
- How well does the school collect and analyse a range of attainment data, including performance data in sport, music and the creative arts?
- How well does the school use a range of data to identify, track and monitor the progress of more able and talented learners?

### **2.3 Care, support and guidance**

- Is there an ethos which sets high expectations for all learners and encourages emotional, social, physical and intellectual development?
- Does the school identify individual needs when the learners join them and ensure these needs are met?

### **2.4 Learning environment**

- Do learners have access to suitable resources, including information and communications technology and research and information sources, which interest, challenge and extend their learning and enable them to achieve their full potential?

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>
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### **3.1 Leadership**

- Do the school's policies support consistent and effective practice for more able and talented learners?
- Are governors involved in securing appropriate provision for more able and talented learners?

### **3.2 Improving quality**

- Is there systematic monitoring and rigorous evaluation to ensure that all learners achieve their full potential?

### **3.3 Partnership working**

- Does the school work closely with the parents/carers of more able and talented learners and provide appropriate guidance that enables them to support their children effectively?
- Does the school have links with other schools, colleges, the local authority, outside agencies and other organisations that help to further extend and enrich learners' experiences?
- How effective are transition arrangements in ensuring continued challenge for more able and talented learners?

### **3.4 Resource management**

- Is there staff development to help practitioners develop their own expertise in identifying and meeting the needs of more able and talented learners?