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Gifted and Talented education: Guidance on addressing underachievement – planning a whole-school approach

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Introduction

Giving every single child the chance to be the best they can be, whatever their talent or background, is not the betrayal of excellence; it is the fulfilment of it.

'Personalised learning: Building a new relationship with schools', a speech by David Miliband, Minister of State for School Standards, North of England Education Conference, Belfast, 8 January 2004

The 2005 White Paper, *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All,* set provision for gifted and talented learners clearly in the context of personalisation.

This approach has been developed within the national programme for gifted and talented (G&T) education with three key principles:

● developing quality first teaching (QFT);

● counteracting disadvantage;

● preventing and addressing underachievement.

Why focus on underachievement of gifted and talented learners?

Underachievement is not found exclusively among pupils who are failing to meet national expectations. National data sources show that:

● there is significant underachievement among our more able pupils;

● marked gaps exist between the progress, achievement and attainment of some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, for example, pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers.

The Department for Children, Families and Schools (DCSF) defines gifted and talented pupils as:

Children and young people with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities).

Identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started, Revised May 2008 (DCSF, 2008), page 1

The pupils who are the particular focus of this guidance – those at risk of underachievement, including those from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds – currently fail to have their abilities recognised or to make the progress that they should. These pupils may not achieve highly in formal assessment; they may lack the aspirations, the motivation and the support systems of some of their peers.

Schools can only address this through a strategic, whole-school approach to planning provision, ensuring that pupils have access to a quality first teaching environment, along with specific and effective interventions, in order to foster and to discover ability. Del Siegle (2007) described clearly the need for schools to be engaged in:

…a two-step process: first provide opportunities for talent to surface, then recognise that talent and help to move it to exceptional levels.

Siegle, D., (2007) 'The time is now to stand up for gifted education: NAGC Presidential Address' in *Gifted Child Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 2

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This guidance

All schools are encouraged to evaluate and develop effective provision for gifted and talented pupils within the context of personalisation for all. The **Institutional Quality Standards (IQS)** provide a framework for this and should be used as the basis for consideration of whole-school strategies to counteract underachievement. In addition, the **Classroom Quality Standards (CQS**) provide support for teachers in developing quality first teaching that will challenge and engage all pupils, including those identified as gifted and talented.

These two frameworks provide the starting points for the key messages and approaches outlined in this guidance.

This is the final booklet in the current series of five titles addressing the issues of gifted and talented education for learners who are underachieving or are at risk of underachieving. The information and guidance builds on previous publications by:

- offering a definition of underachievement in the context of gifted and talented education;

- suggesting a model for planning whole-school provision within the context of personalisation;

- providing examples of some effective strategies for recognising and addressing underachievement from current practice in schools;

- signposting further relevant materials and resources.

Who is this guidance for?

The guidance has been written primarily for:

- headteachers and senior leaders in schools;

- leading teachers and coordinators for gifted and talented education;

- inclusion managers.

It is also intended as a resource for local authorities (LAs) to use to support schools in developing whole-school strategies to address underachievement.

The contents may, however, be useful to others, such as governors, teachers, practitioners and support staff, who are interested in tackling underachievement within their schools.

Section 1
Narrowing the gaps in relation to gifted and talented pupils

Key messages

- All children have the right to have their abilities recognised and developed.

- Nationally, some groups are at particular risk of:

  - not having their abilities acknowledged;

  - not making the expected levels of progress.

Narrowing the gaps that exist in the achievement and progress of some pupils is now a national priority. The recent White Paper, *New Opportunities – Fair chances for the future*, focused on social mobility and the wide gap in aspiration and achievement between disadvantaged and vulnerable children and their peers. The White Paper characterises successful schools as those that:

> *…are increasingly tailoring their curriculum and teaching methods to individual pupil needs, and supporting the progress of each child in different subjects by tracking their progress, reporting regularly to parents, and ensuring that each pupil gets the support they need to take the next step forward.*
>
> *New Opportunities – Fair chances for the future* (2009), page 48

This builds on the acknowledgement in *2020 Vision: Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group* (DfES, 2006) that, while the causes of underachievement are wide-ranging and deeply embedded in the social and economic fabric, it is the responsibility of schools to provide an environment that will meet the social, emotional and learning needs of all pupils:

> *…gaps persist in part simply because they are difficult to rectify; the factors that contribute to them are complex and inter-related. These include individual attitudes, beliefs and expectations of pupils, parents and teachers. Closely linked to these are deep seated social challenges, such as institutional racism, urban regeneration, economic development and migration. However the gaps also persist because for too many pupils, school does not engage them or equip them with the skills they need.*
>
> *2020 Vision: Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group* (DfES, 2006), page 7

Indeed, local authorities and schools need to be mindful of the statutory duties as set out within the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and within the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which places a duty on all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. This includes providing equal opportunities for all pupils to succeed at the highest level possible, by removing barriers to access and participation.

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> **In relation to gifted and talented learners, schools need to plan strategies to narrow the gap between:**
>
> - **what pupils achieve and what they are capable of achieving given motivation, access and opportunity;**
>
> - **the proportion achieving at the higher levels of any group in the gifted and talented population, and the overall school population;**
>
> - **the proportion of any group making at least two levels of progress in each key stage in the gifted and talented population, and the overall school population.**

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There is compelling evidence from national data that inequalities exist between specific groups both in terms of:

- rates of progress and attainment at the higher levels;

> In 2007, at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), 18 per cent fewer boys than girls achieved 9 points in Writing, and 14 per cent fewer in Creative Development.
>
> In 2007, at the end of Key Stage 2, 64 per cent of FSM pupils had made two levels of progress from level 3 to level 5 in English, compared with 77 per cent of non-FSM pupils.
>
> In 2008, at the end of Key Stage 4, 7 per cent of FSM pupils gained a GCSE grade B or above in both English and mathematics, compared with 23 per cent of all pupils.

- their representation within gifted and talented cohorts.

> **FSM:** secondary-age pupils who are eligible for free school meals are 50 per cent less likely to be identified as gifted and talented than those who are not.
>
> **SEN:** at secondary school, 7 per cent of learners with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), hearing impairments or visual impairments are identified as being G&T, compared with 11.8 per cent who are identified overall.
>
> **Ethnicity:** in primary schools Pakistani children make up 3.7 per cent of the learner population, but only 3 per cent of the G&T cohort.
>
> **Month of birth:** at primary school, 10.5 per cent of September-born learners are identified as G&T, compared to 3.9 per cent of those born in August. The gap persists in secondary schools, with 14.2 per cent of September-born learners identified as G&T compared to 9.6 per cent of August-born.
>
> Gifted and Talented National Register Report 2008

This guidance sets out advice to schools on ways in which this underachievement and these inequalities can be addressed.

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Section 2
Recognising underachievement

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Key messages

- Gifted and talented learners are not a homogenous group. They come from all backgrounds and have a wide range of gifts and talents.

- Teachers have a responsibility actively to seek potential in all pupils.

- School assessment systems need to be rigorous and effective at all levels in order to identify individuals and groups of pupils who are at risk of underachievement and to track the impact of interventions.

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Who are the underachievers?

Data suggest that significant numbers of pupils are not identified as gifted and talented because, for various reasons, their abilities are not recognised and nurtured. Particular groups of pupils who are vulnerable include those:

- who are from low socio-economic groups;

- who are from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups with a record of underperformance (including Black African, Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, some mixed heritage, Gypsy Roma Traveller);

- with English as an additional language (EAL), including advanced bilingual pupils;

- in small rural schools with limited resources;

- who have special educational needs (SEN);

- with medical conditions and/or disabilities;

- from service families who have moved from school to school;

- who are new arrivals (including asylum seekers/refugees);

- who are poor attenders;

- who act as carers in the home;

- who are pregnant teenagers;

- from families under stress;

- who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion;

- who are in public care;

- who have a 'spiky' profile, such as a mismatch between their cognitive ability and their basic skills;

- with summer birthdays.

There are several reasons why these pupils are missing from schools' G&T registers. They may often be those who:

- are not given opportunities to develop and demonstrate their particular gifts and talents, or are not supported/encouraged to take advantage of these;

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- experience economic, cultural, emotional and/or social barriers to participation;

- have incomplete prior attainment history;

- have underdeveloped writing skills;

- have achievements outside the school curriculum.

If ability is not to go unrecognised, teachers need to plan classroom provision that stimulates engagement with learning and can enable pupils to demonstrate their ability.

Teachers should beware of any bias in their own attitudes while assessing potential, for example, being influenced by pupils' behaviour. Checklists of characteristics that may provide indicators of underachievement can be useful; for example, one is provided in Appendix 2 of *Gifted and Talented Education: Guidance on preventing underachievement: a focus on dual or multiple exceptionality (DME)*.

Pupil case study: Jake

Jake is a gifted boy with highly developed interpersonal skills and a flair for cooking. The youngest of four children, he travelled the world with his mum and siblings until he was ten years old, before settling down with a new 'dad' in Yorkshire. In secondary school, his special interest has been design and technology, particularly in the sphere of food and catering, and he is predicted to get an A* at GCSE in this subject.

Jake has been less successful in other subjects, however, finding it difficult to write essays and often truanting from school to ride his mountain bike and pursue an 'outdoor life'. Clean but rather shabby, Jake hasn't enjoyed much attention from his teachers; his mother's rather bohemian style of dress has undermined her standing when she has tried to take issue about Jake's low grades with staff at parents' meetings. She is a classic underachiever, having opted out of education at an early age, and is currently working as a teaching assistant (TA) in a local primary school.

No one in his family has been to college or university and Jake's aspirations are limited to getting a job in a local café when he leaves school at 16.

Questions to consider

- Is there a 'Jake' in your school?

- What strategies should be in place for supporting and motivating Jake and helping him to fulfil his potential?

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Using data

Evaluating gifted and talented education: The school improvement partner's role in engaging the school (DCSF, 2009) provides:

- information about key datasets that schools should consider in relation to able, gifted and talented pupils;

- some key questions that schools should be asking in their analysis of data.

The handbook stresses that the school needs to evaluate *'the impact of its approach to G&T education on pupil progress and standards achieved'* and to *'come to a conclusion whether or not its interventions have been appropriate and sufficient'* (page 5).

Using data to analyse the attainment and rates of progress of pupils

Analysis of historical data is particularly useful for identifying pupil groups in the school who may:

- be under-represented at the higher levels of attainment;

- make less progress within a key stage than other groups in the school.

It can also inform the school about trends over time in the attainment and progress of gifted and talented pupils. Schools should consider how their data relate to the national data and to those of similar pupils in similar schools.

The interactive tools in RAISEonline, such as the subject selector and the grouping and filtering options, enable schools to analyse data about individual pupils and pupil groups, and can help schools to identify particular patterns of underachievement within pupil sub-groups.

Guidance on using data in relation to gifted and talented pupils will be available to schools in 2010.

School case study: Primary school T

When the senior management team of primary school T analysed the mathematics results in both key stages they discovered that, although the results were above the national average, they were disappointing because only a few children had reached level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 and level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2.

The following year, teachers identified pupils whom they believed to be more able mathematicians but who were underachieving. The headteacher contracted an enthusiastic mathematics teacher to teach three target groups for two terms. The sessions were planned to challenge the pupils' thinking and problem-solving skills. The project was a success, not only increasing the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of each key stage, but also improving the pupils' attitudes and enjoyment of mathematics.

In the final term, the teacher and subject leader led a whole-school 'Challenge Maths' in-service training (INSET) day and supported the staff in planning for integrating the approaches into mainstream lessons.

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Using data to set appropriately challenging targets and to track the rates of progress of both individual pupils, and of specific groups

The use of effective management systems to track pupils' progress is essential in order to identify:

- pupils and groups of pupils at risk of making insufficient progress across a key stage;

- pupils and groups of pupils making better progress than expected, who may need to have targets and expectations reviewed;

- the impact of specific intervention strategies;

- progress of cohorts and groups towards statutory targets.

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A key ingredient in a system of effective tracking of progress is rigorous and accurate teacher assessment. **Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)** provides this rigour, giving an ongoing profile of achievement and providing strengths and areas for improvement. This is particularly relevant to meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils:

- to underpin appropriately challenging targets;

- to identify where a pupil is not making the expected progress in a specific aspect of his or her learning;

- to enable intervention to be appropriately targeted;

- to monitor the impact of specific interventions, in order that plans may be adjusted.

    … where teacher assessment data are inadequate or unreliable, underperformance is likely to go unnoticed and resources can be misdirected, such as to inappropriate groups of pupils and poorly targeted intervention programmes.

    Personalised Learning – A Practical Guide (DCSF, 2008), page 15

Some schools may find the Fischer Family Trust D (FFT D) estimates to be helpful when they are considering individual pupil targets, while, for some individuals and groups, they may not be sufficiently challenging.

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School case study: Secondary school F

In secondary school F, teachers set realistic but aspirational targets for the end of the key stage for each pupil they teach within their subject, using a range of available data. These include results of cognitive abilities tests (CATs), Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 scores, Fischer Family Trust D estimates, transition information and internal assessment data. This information is shared with pupils and parents.

Progress reviews are carried out by teachers three times over a year. Teachers compare current attainment to pupil targets and are asked to judge whether each pupil is:

- a cause for real concern due to underperformance;

- potentially unlikely to meet their end-of-year target;

- on course to meet their year target;

- exceeding their target for the year based on current work rate.

Effort in class and homework is also reviewed and logged.

The data manager collects and collates this information, using it to produce reports for parents and also at-a-glance colour maps of pupil progress. This information, together with pupil interviews, is used by departments to consider where planning needs to be adjusted to meet pupils' needs. The leading teacher also identifies those more able pupils, and groups of pupils, who seem to be at risk of underachievement across the board, and ensures that they have access to appropriate coordinated support.

Using data to monitor how far the school's gifted and talented cohort is broadly representative of the school population

Regular analysis of the school's gifted and talented register is necessary to highlight the under-representation of particular groups of pupils, for example, in:

- specific subject and talent areas;

- particular year groups.

School case study: Secondary school B

The leading teacher in secondary school B had asked subject departments to identify pupils for the gifted and talented register. However, analysis of the data by year group, and discussion of this with pastoral year heads, enabled the school to identify that:

- while all ethnic groups were represented in the whole-school cohort, this masked significant under-representation amongst older pupils in the school;

- few pupils were identified in PE, where the department only nominated pupils who already performed at county level;

- some ethnic groups were well represented in the talent areas, but rarely identified within academic subjects.

As a result, the school has reviewed the identification criteria that it uses and is beginning to address inequalities in the cohort.

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Some questions to consider

- How effectively are data analysed, at every level in the school, to plan learning for gifted and talented pupils?

- What types of data does the school use to provide information about such features as pupils' attitudes and participation?

- Which groups of pupils in the school does data analysis suggest may be at risk of underachievement?

- Are there any specific groups of pupils that are under-represented on the gifted and talented register?

- What account is taken of pupil voice in identifying abilities and talents?

- Is there a rigorous tracking system to alert staff when individuals or groups of pupils are not making expected progress?

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Section 3
Planning a whole-school approach – ethos and organisation

Key messages

- Tackling underachievement and narrowing the gaps needs the commitment of the whole school community in dealing with the learning, social and emotional needs of the pupils.

- Underpinning this challenge is a set of three values – the three As, to:

  - ensure **access** to high-quality learning experiences;

  - raise **aspirations**;

  - raise **achievement** for all children and young people.

The elements of the **Institutional Quality Standards (IQS)** that relate to school organisation are a good starting point in considering the essential foundations that will be needed to underpin an effective whole-school approach to tackling underachievement. Schools may find the extract in Appendix 1 useful.

The creation of a positive ethos, emotional climate and culture of achievement for the school is shown to be vitally important in promoting learner well-being and improving outcomes for all, especially for vulnerable groups. Such a positive school climate includes:

- a strong, inclusive and shared vision and leadership;

- a whole-school approach to pastoral care;

- an effective behaviour management strategy that rewards good behaviour, ensures that pupils feel safe and able to take risks in their learning and does not tolerate bullying and bad behaviour;

- strategies that promote social and community cohesion and tackle negative cultural influences.

Inclusive quality first teaching

The main focus should be to create the right opportunities within the classroom, to help pupils to develop the desire to learn and positive learning behaviours, such as resourcefulness and resilience. This will be achieved by planning activities that challenge and excite pupils on a daily basis, in an environment that celebrates success and recognises and rewards perseverance.

The key characteristics of quality first teaching can be summarised as:

- highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives;

- high demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning;

- high levels of interaction for all pupils;

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- appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explanation;

- an emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups;

- an expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently;

- regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils.

Personalised Learning – A Practical Guide (DCSF, 2008), page 12

Teacher expectations

Teachers need to be open-minded about who can excel, avoid constructing 'glass ceilings' and understand that giftedness may only emerge when the appropriate opportunities are provided. A pupil may have a predisposition to excel in one or more areas, but only demonstrate this if encouraged and supported to do so. Use of **Assessment for Learning (AfL)** strategies will provide pupils with positive feedback that recognises what has been achieved, as well as indicating what they need to do to improve.

Several schools tackled teachers' expectations for all pupils in each lesson by increasing the emphasis on learning outcomes and their success criteria, rather than just learning objectives.

This caused teachers to reconsider the lesson design. For example, having identified what they wanted pupils to learn, they considered what a quality outcome would look like and what to do to help all pupils to achieve a high standard.

Once teachers had begun to explicitly identify the success criteria for the intended outcome, as part of their planning, it became much easier for them to scaffold the learning for the lesson, for example, by modelling a quality outcome at the start of the lesson.

Where this was successful it impacted on the quality of the teacher feedback, particularly with more focused and challenging questioning. Teachers quickly began to recognise the impact of using learning objectives and success criteria to promote more independent learning.

Assessment for Learning: 8 schools project report (DFES, 2007), page 22

Pupil self-image

The benefits to disadvantaged children of being selected as part of a gifted and talented cohort are considerable (Maurin and McNally, 2007), bestowing self-belief and confidence and making a positive impact on achievement. Being chosen is an external endorsement and can give the boost a pupil needs to become more socially mobile. Apart from the clear gains to be made by sharing information with parents and involving them as full partners in support of their child's learning, this is a strong reason why schools should tell pupils (and their parents) when their abilities have been identified.

By focusing on discussion of **learning behaviours and processes**, rather than on performance, teachers can develop pupils' confidence in their ability to enhance their own performance. Carol Dweck's research in US secondary schools[1] identified those pupils who believed that intelligence could be cultivated and developed through effort and persistence. These pupils tended to:

- actively seek out new challenges;

- welcome opportunities for intellectual development;

- respond positively to feedback;

1. Blackwell, L. Trzesniewski, K. Dweck, C. (2007) 'Implicit Theories of Intelligence Predict Achievement Across an Adolescent Transition: A Longitudinal Study and an Intervention', *Child Development*, 78, Number 1, pp.246 – 263

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● feel comfortable in asking for help.

Dweck's research showed that pupils with this 'growth mindset' performed better in their studies and made more academic progress than those with a 'fixed mindset' who viewed intelligence as a fixed trait rather than as a quality which could be developed and expanded. Most importantly, the research indicated that mindsets can be changed with relatively simple interventions, for example, providing feedback that gives pupils effective guidance on how they can work to improve their future performance.

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Emotional and social development

Emotional and social development has a direct impact on pupils' learning and achievement and schools that take a proactive approach to teaching these skills, for example, through the National Strategies' **Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)** programmes, are addressing some of the barriers that can result in underachievement.

Successful programmes result in pupils who are motivated and equipped to:

● be effective and successful learners;

● make and sustain friendships;

● deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly;

● solve problems with others or by themselves;

● manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety;

● be able to promote calm and optimistic states that promote the achievement of goals;

● recover from setbacks and persist in the face of difficulties;

● work and play cooperatively;

● compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for competitors;

● recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others;

● understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the right of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.

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Learning opportunities beyond the classroom

While schools should ensure that *all* gifted and talented pupils have access to a range of suitable opportunities that might take place before and/or after school, at weekends and/or during school holidays, this is of particular importance for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. These activities offer opportunities for them to learn in settings that are different from the classroom. This may be a more informal setting within school or college, or a completely different setting such as a field centre, a theatre or museum, a university or on-line. Pupils who have access to these kinds of opportunities have been shown to demonstrate increased self-confidence and self-esteem, increased love of learning and personal satisfaction, improved motivation, higher aspirations and, ultimately, better school attainment.

Teachers should be aware that the take-up of additional opportunities beyond the classroom is not always easy for some families: financial constraints, caring commitments, working hours, transport difficulties, health problems – any number of issues – can result in reasons not to do it. Active support and encouragement, together with some creative problem-solving or financial support, may be needed to provide pupils with opportunities that could make all the difference. For example, schools may provide pupils with access to computers and a quiet place to study outside school hours or offer enrichment opportunities at lunch-times.

Research into effective strategies for 'narrowing the gap' found that interventions are most successful when they are:

- long-term;

- holistic and linked, dealing with the full range of obstacles and negative influences holding children back;

- focused on the whole family, with children learning and working with their parents/carers;

- designed to build upon the positive elements and experiences of children's lives and take account of value and belief systems.

Kendall, S., Straw, S,. Jones. M., Springate, I., Lord, P., and Stoney, S., (2007) *Narrowing the Gap in outcomes for vulnerable groups*, National Foundation for Educational Research

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Some questions to consider

- Have we recently used the IQS to audit our gifted and talented provision?

- What priorities, in relation to those groups who are most at risk of underachievement in our school, have we chosen to focus upon in our school improvement plan?

- Does the school ethos support a culture of achievement? How is this consistently evidenced – in displays, communications, assemblies, classrooms?

- Is there a shared understanding among all staff of the importance of balancing the social and emotional needs of pupils against their academic progress?

- Have we discussed as a school what we mean by having 'high expectations' of pupils and how this is evidenced in the classroom?

- Do we encourage pupils to develop a 'growth mindset' in the discussions we have with them?

- What opportunities do we provide to share with pupils and parents what being identified as 'gifted and talented' means in our school?

- How do we provide support for all pupils to access the gifted and talented provision that is available?

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Section 4
Planning a whole-school approach: the three-waves model of intervention
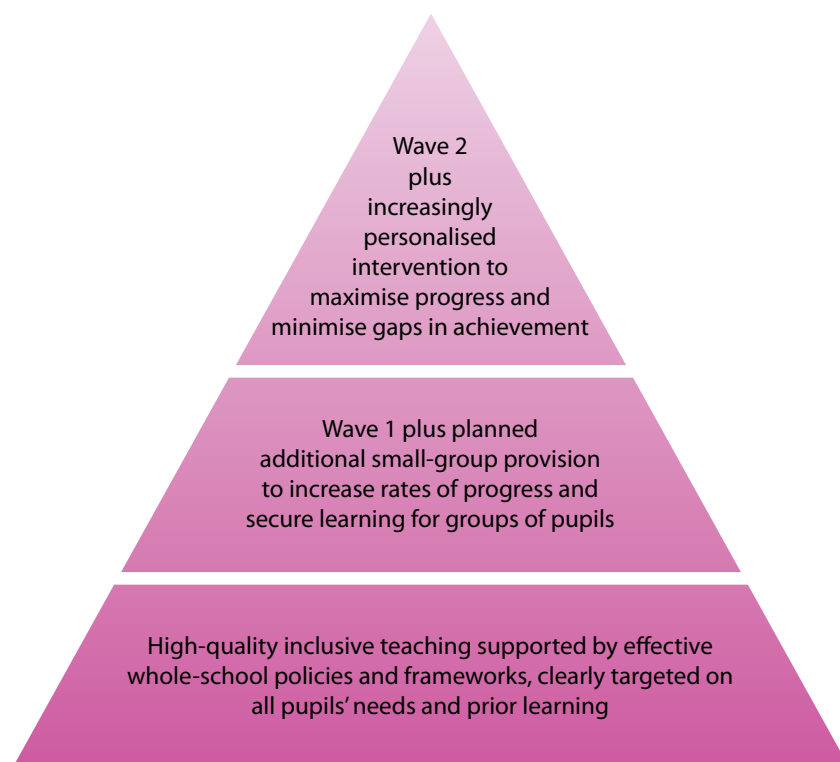
Key messages

- Provision to identify and develop abilities must start from quality first teaching for all, which employs a wide range of teaching styles and approaches to take into account the different ways pupils learn.

- Provision for underachieving pupils will include specific interventions to overcome the barriers between pupils and the learning, and to accelerate rates of progress.

Many schools will be familiar with the three-waves model of intervention in relation to planning support for pupils who are performing below expected levels. This can also provide an effective framework for planning provision for gifted and talented pupils, including those who are at risk of underachievement.

The model starts from the premise that Wave 1 is the effective inclusion of all pupils in high-quality teaching and learning. This is the starting point for any school.

In relation to gifted and talented provision, the model looks like this.

The three-waves model

Wave 2
plus
increasingly
personalised
intervention to
maximise progress and
minimise gaps in achievement

Wave 1 plus planned
additional small-group provision
to increase rates of progress and
secure learning for groups of pupils

High-quality inclusive teaching supported by effective
whole-school policies and frameworks, clearly targeted on
all pupils' needs and prior learning

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Wave 1

The **Classroom Quality Standards (CQS)** provide a framework for evaluating Wave 1 provision, based on seven features of effective teaching and learning. Some examples of general Wave 1 strategies that might particularly benefit pupils at risk of underachievement are provided in the table below. The online **CQS guided resource** provides subject-specific guidance and exemplification (English, mathematics, science and ICT) of how to provide high challenge and high support for more able and gifted pupils on a day-to-day basis. The resource can be accessed at www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies. Search, using the reference 'Gifted and Talented: Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) guided resource'.

Classroom Quality Standards: Key features Wave 1 Inclusive whole-class teaching	Wave 1 Some suggested strategies to support underachievers
CQS Feature 1 Conditions for learning *Pupils work in a classroom climate in which they feel safe, secure and valued.*	• Predetermined seating arrangements for whole-class sessions support reticent pupils and pupils with poor social skills.
CQS Feature 2 Development of learning *Questions probe understanding and develop thinking and reflection.*	• Teaching approaches that encourage higher-order thinking, such as use of Bloom's Taxonomy, help to structure the thinking of all pupils, but particularly benefit the underachiever. • Use of 'no hands up' questioning techniques encourages all pupils to become involved in discussing and providing the answers. • The use of target questions for particular individual pupils promotes their involvement.
CQS Feature 3 Knowledge of subjects and themes *Teaching is lively, engaging and involves a carefully planned blend of approaches that direct pupils' learning.*	• Underachieving pupils benefit from occasionally planning an input into the lesson, e.g. prepare a piece of text, research an aspect of science. • Getting pupils engaged in their learning is key – provide a stimulus and some opportunities for pupils to choose according to their interests.
CQS Feature 4 Planning *A range of assessment strategies, including peer and self-assessment, inform teaching.*	• Self-assessment is a powerful motivator. • Inviting pupils to choose and define the success criteria for their work and then to evaluate their work against their chosen criteria helps them to visualise the outcome and promotes their involvement in learning.
CQS Feature 5 Understanding learners' needs *Pupils are offered a variety of ways in which to record their learning.*	• Research shows that many underachieving pupils are reluctant to record their learning. • Providing opportunities for choice of content within the topic and choice of method of presentation motivates underachievers and encourages them to work to their potential.

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| CQS Feature 6 Engagement with learners and learning

Pupil groupings are flexible and maximise learning. | • Some pupils find group work difficult – working with a partner or working when all members of the group have a clearly defined role helps such pupils.

• Guided ability group work clearly focused on the needs of the group benefits underachieving pupils – such sessions provide opportunities for working at greater depth or accelerated pace. |
| CQS Feature 7 Links beyond the classroom

G&T learners access homework that extends interests and raises achievement.

Various approaches, notably ICT, are used to help G&T learners extend their learning beyond the classroom. | • ICT provides opportunities for a number of underachieving gifted and talented learners to show their abilities in ways not readily validated by school, for example, as film-makers, computer-gamers, editors. |

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School case study: Primary school A

A Year 5 class has been studying the topic 'Space'. The teacher led the learning initially and then asked the pupils to select their own aspect of the topic for further research. The pupils selected their own media, including slide presentations, drama, models, interviews, for presenting their research to the rest of the class. Before beginning the work, the pupils decided on three levels of assessment: learner, amateur and professor, and considered the standards for each level, related to their own proposed presentation.

One boy chose to investigate the gases on each of the planets in the Solar System and decided to present his work in the form of a narrative. He compiled his own criteria:

Learner

- two facts
- rubbish storyline
- boring title
- makes the reader want to stop reading

Amateur

- three–ten facts
- OK storyline
- quite good title
- makes the reader bother to read but not fixed

Professor

- twenty facts
- a great storyline
- makes the reader want to read it all day

At the end of the project, the pupils assessed their work against their criteria and assessed each other's work. This approach supported and motivated all the pupils, but particularly the underachievers. They relished the opportunity for choice and chose challenging areas of study. The assessment grid helped them to decide what they were aiming for. They continually checked their work against it and they all completed the task effectively.

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Wave 2

In addition to quality first teaching, some gifted and talented pupils, particularly those with a 'spiky' profile, may benefit from existing, time-limited intervention programmes that provide additional challenge. Crucially, Wave 2 support and challenge needs to be well integrated with whole-class teaching and help pupils apply their learning in mainstream lessons and in independent work.

The table below provides some examples of Wave 2 interventions, including both generic catch-up programmes and indications of tailored provision for groups of underachieving gifted and talented pupils.

Some examples of existing specific time-limited intervention programmes, designed to put pupils back on track	Additional intervention strategies to support identified groups of learners
• *Talking Partners* *A programme to support speaking and listening in the early years.* • *Early Literacy Support* *A 16-week intervention programme for small groups of children in Year 1, led by the TA.* • *Year 3 Literacy Support* *A 16-week programme for small groups of 6 pupils.* • *Further Literacy Support* *A 12-week programme of support for groups of six pupils in Year 5.* • *Springboard 3, 4, 5* *Mathematics support programmes for small groups of pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5.* • *Literacy progress units supporting pupils in Year 7* • Reading Challenge for pupils in Years 7 and 8. • Writing Challenge for pupils in Years 7 and 8. • Mathematics Challenge. • Study Plus – mathematics, English and science units for GCSE target groups.	• **Social skills group sessions** – some gifted and talented pupils find difficulty in working with others; this is particularly true of some underachieving pupils. In such cases a series of social skills sessions focusing on listening, turn taking, negotiating, sharing roles can be beneficial. • **Learning conversations** – all pupils can benefit from a learning conversation. Those pupils whose attainment or participation is limited by their perceptions of themselves as learners will benefit most. Topics for a series of learning conversations include: concentration, problem-solving, creative thinking, motivation, enquiry. • **Specific support for EAL pupils** – although gifted and talented pupils who are EAL learners may appear to speak the language fluently, their results may be disappointing. They understand the basic words of a subject, e.g. in science: Bunsen burner, forces, evaporation, but they do not understand the academic key words, identified by the REAL project, www.realproject.org.uk such as: analyse, compare, apply, select – words necessary for research and examinations. In order to realise their potential they may need additional and subject specialist support in sessions to learn and apply these words. • **Occasional additional guided group session**s provide opportunities to work on objectives from later years or to discuss progress against targets. • **Masterclasses** led by an expert can provide opportunities to group pupils by readiness and interest rather than age, with the learning set at a challenging level. • **Lunchtime, after school and residential activities** – an activity that is not the conventional 'school subject' may be the spark to ignite an interest in a pupil who has disengaged from traditional schoolwork. • **Involvement in learning activities beyond the classroom** – e.g. local networks, weekend enrichment classes, classes provided by the Excellence Hub or Regional Partnerships can raise aspirations and offer support from others with similar interests and abilities.

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Pupil case study: Carly

Carly is a child of a service family and was accustomed to moving schools every two to three years. When her father's unit moved into the area, together with other pupils from the unit, she entered school U, a small urban primary school. Carly was socially awkward and working well below the expected level for Year 5. She showed little or no interest in schoolwork.

The school offers a wide range of after-school activities and residential opportunities to all its pupils. Carly's class was invited to attend a week's adventure course. Now in the same position as other pupils – on new and unfamiliar ground – Carly suddenly showed that she had strong leadership qualities. Her peers began to respect her and Carly began to believe in herself.

Back at school, she was invited to join the drama group where she showed outstanding talent and, a year later, she was entered for the city's Drama Festival where she won an award. The school invites sponsorship from local businesses and the headteacher acquired a place for Carly at Saturday classes at a professional drama school. The increase in her confidence and self-esteem was reflected in her academic work and she achieved well above-average results at the end of Key Stage 2. Carly continues to flourish at secondary school.

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School case study: Secondary school L

Teachers at secondary school L were frustrated that a large group of bright girls had low aspirations, wanting to be beauticians or hairdressers. The Aimhigher coordinator decided not to try to change the girls' interests but to present higher goals, such as aspiring to study for appropriate degrees and then running their own salons.

The coordinator arranged for three ambassadors to visit the school: one was a former hairdresser who was taking a degree course in complementary therapies, another was studying midwifery and the third was a former pupil who was studying business. They talked to the girls about their subjects and avenues into health and beauty, such as foundation degrees in beauty therapy, hairdressing and salon management.

The sessions really motivated the girls to achieve success in their GCSEs so that they could consider going on to university in the future.

Adapted from *The Extra Mile: How schools succeed in raising aspirations in deprived communities* (DCSF, 2008), page 25

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Wave 3

Wave 3 interventions for gifted and talented pupils will typically be tailored to meet individual need, because of exceptional ability, a very significant barrier to learning or complex needs. Provision may include some form of individual mentoring or tuition and/or access to support or opportunities beyond the school, such as attendance at a university summer school or involvement in local arts provision. Some examples are given in the table below.

Where it is working effectively, the three-waves model will have a funnelling effect, reducing (through quality first teaching) the numbers requiring Wave 2 intervention and (through Wave 2) the numbers who need more intensive and individual help. This means that schools will be able to target their resources more effectively, at fewer children.

Some examples of existing intervention programmes designed to provide intensive support for pupils who are working below the expected levels	Some examples of additional interventions that can support gifted and talented pupils who are at risk of underachieving
• *Every Child a Reader – a suite of literacy interventions for pupils in Year 1.* • *Every Child a Writer – for pupils in Years 3 and 4.* • *Every Child Counts – for primary school pupils.* *All the above include one-to-one intervention materials.* • *Secondary intervention – a suite of materials for Key Stages 3 and 4 to support one-to-one tuition.*	• Individualised programmes of learning, with associated setting, reviewing and evaluating of personal targets. • Raising aspirations through business mentoring, student ambassadors, peer mentoring, mentoring, e.g. by the leading teacher for G&T. • Social stories, behaviour charts, cooling-off space. • Using alternative methods of recording for pupils with literacy difficulties, e.g. mapping thought processes, diagramming. • Additional intensive language support for EAL pupils. • Academic mentoring within a specific field (such as from the community, business, higher education institutions (HEI). • Specialist advanced courses, e.g. Open University Young Applicants in Schools and Colleges Scheme (YASS) modules. • Summer schools, such as those offered by Young Gifted and Talented (YG&T) through Regional Partnerships and Excellence Hubs; the International Gateway for Gifted Youth (IGGY) events run by the University of Warwick www2.warwick.ac.uk/study/iggy

In addition to good quality wave 1 and wave 2 and 3 interventions, some able pupils who are not making the expected levels of progress will benefit from time-limited, highly tailored **one-to-one tuition**.

Typically this might involve coaching aimed at equipping the learner with self-help strategies and new ways of thinking about a problem, in order to secure learning. In well-planned sessions pupils who are 'stuck' in a particular aspect of the curriculum can develop confidence as well as techniques which can be of benefit in a range of contexts.

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Pupil case study: Jack

Jack's ability is masked by his social and behavioural problems characterised by:

- frequent outbursts of temper;
- inability to work with others;
- confrontational behaviour in the playground;
- questioning of authority;
- inability to cope with change.

Jack prefers reading to any other activity. He is an avid reader and extremely articulate, asking searching questions. He shows a keen interest in history and science. However, his class work does not reflect his obvious ability and he becomes frustrated and angry in class because he is unable to finish his work.

Jack's teacher has given him a special quiet place to sit during whole-class sessions and he is encouraged to retreat to a quiet place with a book when his emotions begin to overwhelm him. He has a 'feelings scale' to help him manage his emotions. It identifies who can help him and what he can do to help himself. He rehearses 'social stories' with a teaching assistant. These stories help him to understand how he should behave in various social situations.

The school is part of a network of ten schools that have decided to give their high-ability pupils the opportunity to work with others of similar ability once a week. The schools approached the Day a Week School organisation www.nace.co.uk to support them in this. The pupils work on high-level science, mathematics and philosophy. After discussions with Jack, his parents and the LA adviser, the headteacher applied for a place for Jack. He has attended for two terms and is comfortable with the arrangement, commenting that the other pupils were like himself! He participates in all the activities and this is beginning to improve his self-esteem, in turn enabling him to become more resilient within his day-to-day learning in the classroom. Jack has also been included in a weekend arts course.

Although Jack is making progress, the headteacher contacted the LA special needs team. Jack has been recently diagnosed as having Asperger Syndrome. He will now receive some additional one-to-one support to help him reach his potential.

Some questions to ask

- Is the CQS subject-specific framework used effectively by staff to promote inclusive quality first teaching?
- What continuing professional development (CPD) is needed to increase staff knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to able underachievers?
- Is there a balance of tasks in all lessons, for example, verbal, written, ICT-based?
- Are Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3 levels of intervention used to ensure that the whole school is providing appropriate, skilled, focused support?
- Are Wave 2 and Wave 3 interventions regularly monitored, evaluated and adapted when necessary?
- Are parents and pupils involved in discussions and decisions related to Wave 2 and Wave 3 provision?

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Section 5
Personalising programmes to address underachievement: provision mapping

Key messages

- There should be systematic planning and mapping to ensure curriculum entitlement, effective use of resources and deployment of trained staff to support pupils.

- This should start from secure knowledge of pupils' needs.

- Pupils and their parents should be fully involved in planning provision and in reviewing its impact.

The cycle of school improvement includes five distinct stages of reflection and activity that are essential to the process of improving provision for all pupils, including those who are gifted and talented.

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Planning effective provision fits principally within the cycle at the 'What must we do to make it happen?' stage. Many schools are already strategically mapping provision in relation to identified vulnerable groups and those who are receiving additional support, so that they can make accelerated progress. **Provision maps** can also be very useful in planning provision for gifted and talented pupils, so that this is fully mainstreamed within the school's implementation of its inclusion policy rather than 'bolted on'. Mapping for all types of need helps to secure the efficient deployment of staff and allows for an overview, for any one pupil, of the range of provisions they access over time, so as to avoid duplication or repetition.

The advantages of using provision maps include:

- matching current provision to the actual needs of pupils from term to term or year to year, rather than repeating historical patterns of provision;

- supporting the strategic roles of staff such as the G&T leading teacher or coordinator, the ethnic minority achievement (EMA) coordinator, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) and facilitating a more cohesive approach to addressing underachievement;

- enabling the strategic planning of teachers' CPD;

- providing clear criteria for the allocation of resources;

- reducing bureaucracy and paperwork by highlighting the relevant provisions on a provision map, rather than writing individual education plans;

- helping to make sure that provision for an individual pupil over time is coherent;

- helping to track and evaluate the impact of specific interventions on pupil progress;

- providing a tool for communicating with parents and carers.

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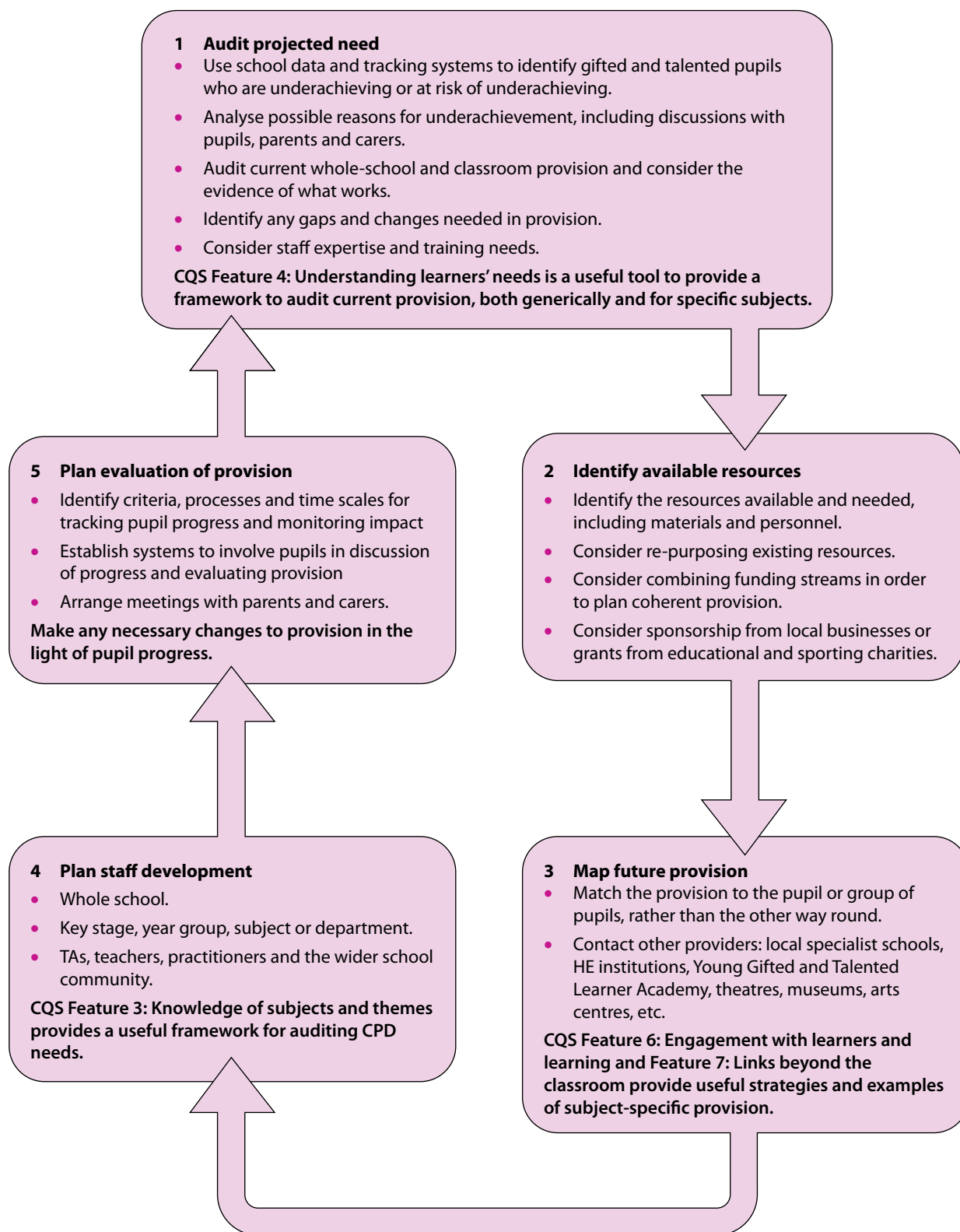## An example of a provision map from a small rural school

	'Special Days'	**Wave 1** Provision for all	**Wave 2** Provision in small focussed groups	**Wave 3** One-to-one provision within socially interactive groups
FS + KS1	Opportunities to work with experts: footballers, musicians, sports week, visitors.	Well-differentiated lessons and activities across all curriculum areas. Thinking days. Activity days.	Year 2 specialist science. Some specialist teaching for each year group. Occasional 'task group' special activities. Exhibitions. DCSF pupil voice research project www.swgate.org.uk Recorder lessons. Key Stage 1 hockey.	Opportunities to discuss special interests with children in the small schools network (video conferencing).
KS2		Dedicated highly differentiated mathematics teaching twice a week. Thinking days.	Small ability-group specialist mathematics teaching. DCSF pupil voice research project. LA Every Child Matters (ECM) film project.	Arts residential courses. Specific targeted gifted and talented opportunities via the Excellence Hub.

In drawing up a provision map, schools need to ensure that the process for monitoring the impact of specific interventions is made clear, as are the qualitative and quantitative measures to be used.

There are many possible ways of mapping provision across a school. A provision map may be drawn up to represent provision for pupils with a specific identified need, such as the one above, or may be organised around another principle, for example including a list of identified children. Larger schools often find it useful to map provision across a key phase or year.

Pupils who have been identified as being at risk of underachievement need to be involved in setting and reviewing their own targets and in planning an integrated intervention programme that meets their needs. Schools have found that this is most effective when parents or carers have also contributed to these discussions. The example of a provision map in Appendix 2 shows how a key stage provision map might be completed for an individual pupil to support this collaborative review and planning.

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Planning effective provision – the process

1   Audit projected need
- Use school data and tracking systems to identify gifted and talented pupils who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving.
- Analyse possible reasons for underachievement, including discussions with pupils, parents and carers.
- Audit current whole-school and classroom provision and consider the evidence of what works.
- Identify any gaps and changes needed in provision.
- Consider staff expertise and training needs.

CQS Feature 4: Understanding learners' needs is a useful tool to provide a framework to audit current provision, both generically and for specific subjects.

5   Plan evaluation of provision
- Identify criteria, processes and time scales for tracking pupil progress and monitoring impact
- Establish systems to involve pupils in discussion of progress and evaluating provision
- Arrange meetings with parents and carers.

Make any necessary changes to provision in the light of pupil progress.

2   Identify available resources
- Identify the resources available and needed, including materials and personnel.
- Consider re-purposing existing resources.
- Consider combining funding streams in order to plan coherent provision.
- Consider sponsorship from local businesses or grants from educational and sporting charities.

4   Plan staff development
- Whole school.
- Key stage, year group, subject or department.
- TAs, teachers, practitioners and the wider school community.

CQS Feature 3: Knowledge of subjects and themes provides a useful framework for auditing CPD needs.

3   Map future provision
- Match the provision to the pupil or group of pupils, rather than the other way round.
- Contact other providers: local specialist schools, HE institutions, Young Gifted and Talented Learner Academy, theatres, museums, arts centres, etc.

CQS Feature 6: Engagement with learners and learning and Feature 7: Links beyond the classroom provide useful strategies and examples of subject-specific provision.

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Section 6
Transfer and transition

Key messages

- Transition processes should ensure that prior attainment and achievement are recognised and progress is maintained.

- Movement between and within schools can provide an opportunity to detect and address underachievement.

Transfer and transition within a school, between schools and colleges and from the EYFS to Key Stage 1 is of particular significance for gifted and talented pupils who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving. Where communication between settings, staff, parents and pupils is less than effective, and information incomplete, the receiving school may waste valuable time before recognising the pupil's ability and making appropriate provision. The move to a different setting presents an opportunity to reassess, with 'fresh eyes', what the pupil can do and, if given the appropriate opportunities, might be able to do.

Some positive responses to the challenges for the receiving teacher/school, include:

- finding out about each pupil's particular abilities;

- supporting pupils who have additional social, emotional and/or learning needs;

- understanding that a possible drop in performance during the settling-in period may mask true potential;

- building on prior learning and experience rather than using a fixed starting point for all learners in the group;

- expecting some pupils to improve their progress and attainment within a new environment or subject area, and being ready to capitalise on this.

Opportunities for collaborative training on gifted and talented provision and underachievement, and observations of lessons in feeder and receiving schools and classes, can help to identify pupils with previously hidden potential and to plan appropriate provision for them.

Combating underachievement at specific transition points

At all stages, the opportunity for teachers to observe a new intake of pupils in their own familiar setting, before the move on, will provide the opportunity for spotting potential, as will the provision of examples of work from the previous key stage.

The table overleaf indicates some strategies that can be used to address issues at specific transition points. Many of these are relevant at any point when a pupil is transferring school, regardless of the key stage.

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Foundation Stage to KS1	• Be alert to signs of potential such as good attention span, well-developed vocabulary and social skills (but be aware that good oral skills do not always indicate high ability). • Be aware that children of this age may exhibit dramatic fluctuations of maturity and educational development. • Consult with parents about their perceptions and observations of a child's achievements.
KS1 to KS2	• Remember that the most able may not necessarily be the most mature; they may not be able to function as independent learners and may not thrive in the more formal learning environment of Key Stage 2. • Ensure that setting arrangements are reassessed regularly. • Be aware that slow development of skills in literacy (especially writing) may mask potential, and ensure that appropriate provision is in place. • Find out about and acknowledge achievements outside school.
KS2 to KS3	• Send information about gifted and talented pupils with particular interests and skills to relevant department heads as well as to the general school contact – this should help to ensure that specialist teachers have appropriately high expectations. • Prepare pupils for the fact that the level of their performance relative to that of other pupils may differ once they arrive at secondary school – use PSHE lessons to discuss any issues they might have to face; make sure that parents are also aware, and provide opportunities to discuss any concerns. • Make sure that the information passed on to secondary schools is not just quantitative, but also qualitative; include attitudes to work, family context information, what motivates or inspires the pupil.
Within KS 3	• Plan induction programmes for transition into each new year; make explicit, in schemes of work and to the pupils themselves, what is special about learning in each year (providing 'new beginnings' and helping to avoid a 'slump' in Years 8 and 9). • Recognise pupils' increasing maturity, adapt reward systems as appropriate and provide opportunities for pupils to take additional responsibilities and to benefit from more privileges as they get older. • Organise grouping to allow young people to move between groups or sets without jeopardising their learning. • Provide clear and detailed information about Key Stage 4 courses, including subject content, teaching and assessment methods, location and possible progression routes, and set up taster courses.

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14–19	• Be as generous as possible with the amount of time given to listening to pupils and helping them to make important decisions about their future, accepting that some will not have a clear idea about what they want to do.
	• Provide access to a local Connexions adviser and/or the website at www.connexions-direct.com
	• Prepare pupils for the demands of 'life outside school' – social skills, personal budgeting, independent living, organisational skills.
	• Establish links with HE institutions to extend pupils' skills and understanding related to their courses and to raise their awareness of the demands, expectations and patterns of university life, and to provide them with insight into a range of opportunities and career paths within commerce and industry.
	• Ensure that pupils have an accurate and up-to-date picture of themselves, their achievements, interests and gifts and talents so that this can be used, alongside guidance, when considering the suitability of opportunities.
	• Many gifted and talented pupils will progress to higher education at 19 – local Aimhigher Partnerships support young people aged 14–19 by providing opportunities that encourage gifted and talented pupils and those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in higher education and provide information about different progression routes (www.aimhigher.ac.uk).

School case study: Primary school W

The mobility of pupils presents a significant challenge for schools as pupils who move from place to place are at risk of underachievement.

The school population of urban primary school W changes about every three years because 26 per cent of its pupils are from service families. The headteacher and staff have a range of strategies in place to effect a smooth transition.

- A year before the transition date the headteacher visits the service school and meets the pupils, teachers and parents.
- A group of parents are elected as key workers to work with the headteacher and the Army Family Liaison Officer.
- Over the year the headteacher builds up a profile of each incoming pupil, using information from a range of data and conversations with teachers and parents.
- Gifts and talents are discussed, as well as learning or behavioural difficulties.
- Pupils' needs and abilities are assessed and the receiving teachers ensure that strategies are in place for the new pupils' arrival.
- The school's other pupils are paired as buddies with the new arrivals.
- A display showing photographs of the new pupils and their previous school is placed in a prominent position in the school.
- The work with the parental key workers continues during the families' stay at the base.

In 2008 the school was rated in its Ofsted inspection as 'outstanding' and the school's transition provision for service children was specifically mentioned.

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Some questions to ask

- Are transfer and transition meetings seen as extra opportunities to identify gifts and talents rather than merely troubleshoot anticipated problems?

- Is there a system for interviewing pupils thought to be gifted and talented but underachieving?

- Is there an effective pupil-tracking system across key stages to monitor progress and identify patchy performance?

- Are visits and discussions with partner schools used to:

  - identify particular areas of difficulty and set appropriate curricular targets for gifted and talented pupils at risk of underachieving;

  - agree the range and type of additional support that should be provided for individual pupils at risk of underachieving, with a clear focus on their abilities and celebration of success?

- Are there established ways of telling pupils and their parents about the opportunities that are available to pupils in a new school or key stage?

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Section 7
Parents and the wider community

Key messages

- Influence of friends, family and the community can impact significantly on achievement.

- Some parents and carers may need support to recognise their children's potential.

- Parents and carers may lack confidence in their ability to provide appropriate support and may be unaware of the educational and career possibilities that exist.

- Schools need to be proactive in working with parents and the community, including those most hard to reach.

Family background and cultural expectations can impact significantly on pupils' motivation and aspirations. A number of factors may result in negative influences, including:

- negative relationships within the family;

- hostility to the child and his/her values (where the influences of school and teachers clashes with the value set of the family/community/religious group);

- excessive expectations/ low expectations;

- lack of support and family stability;

- lack of interest shown in the child's learning (money rich–time poor parents are as prone to this as parents who struggle to look after themselves because of addiction or ill health.);

- complacency about achievement because there is a route already mapped out for the child (in the family business; early marriage; following in father's or mother's footsteps);

- financial hardship.

Establishing a positive relationship with parents can make a big difference. Where schools involve parents in the recognition of a pupil's ability and share with them their predictions for possible outcomes, this can result in raised expectations and improved support. Where parents are unsure about how to help their child, schools can be reassuring and supportive by:

- providing access to information and guidance that will help them understand and will put them in touch with others with similar needs. (e.g. NAGC, www.nagcbritain.org.uk, which has clear and useful information about gifted and talented education and has parent networks across the country);

- recommending the national curriculum website (www.nc.uk.net/gt), which gives information about the kinds of skills and activities pupils should be developing, plus putting in a link on the school website to the exam boards' specifications, past papers and grade descriptions and other relevant information is useful for parents, as is considering parent/child homework tasks and family learning days, existing homework activities can easily be tweaked to direct families to activities that require using higher-order thinking skills and thinking about their working processes and support them with question prompts, for example, *Did you both reach the same conclusion?* – Camborne School in Cornwall, for example has done some interesting work in involving parents in supporting coursework (www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk);

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- offering targeted workshops for parents on memory skills and techniques, thinking skills, reflecting on your own learning, etc;

- facilitating parent groups that offer moral and practical support between families and ensure that parents understand how positive language used with the underachiever can increase self-esteem and motivation.

Pupil case study: Evie

When Evie started school in the Reception Class, at age 4, her mark-making skills were already well developed. She had shown an interest in creative representation from her earliest years and had benefited from a home learning environment where this interest was both recognised and valued. At home, creative resources were provided, opportunities were plentiful and her confidence grew in response to the encouragement given by her family. She could write her name with ease and her paintings, showed a rare sophistication for a child of her age.

On starting school, something strange happened. Day after day, Evie came home with what appeared to be scribbles. Her mum noticed this from the outset but thought that perhaps it was just her initial response to a new experience. As the scribbles continued, her mum became increasingly concerned and arranged to meet the teacher, armed with examples of Evie's artwork. Evie's teacher was amazed to discover the extent of Evie's accomplishments and it was clear that, prior to this meeting, she had gravely underestimated the child's capabilities.

Fortunately, Evie's mum had the confidence to take the first steps and instigate a conversation with Evie's teacher; as a result, expectations were raised and Evie's school experiences began to provide her with a level of challenge appropriate to her developing skills and abilities.

The relationship between parents and practitioners is not always an equal one and many parents, faced with this situation, would have great difficulty in initiating this type of interaction. The result could be dire, as children rise to but seldom exceed our expectations, leading to a downward spiral of underachievement. Practitioners must therefore be proactive in building positive relationships and genuine partnerships with parents, in order to gain an understanding of the whole child in all his or her complexity.

Mark Making Matters: Young children making meaning in all areas of learning and development (DCSF, 2008), page 17

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School case study: Secondary school E

School leadership at secondary school E, identified white working-class girls as the lowest-achieving group in the school. The school is encouraging one of its staff in a research project built around its own data to try to understand the issues it is facing in relation to this:

We've been trying to get a more confident understanding of why, drilling down into the data on individual students. We don't want quick fixes. So, looking at a range of variables, single parents, gifted and talented, free school meals and SEN, we found that the big dip is for students for whom we have limited or no contact or details for parents at home. There's more to do, some of the information is dated and we need to check against what we know about attendance at parental meetings.

We've then identified all the extra provision we offer to Year 11 and which of the students attend and it is stark, the disengagement of this group. We are at early stages but there are definite links between the students' disengagement and parental disengagement. We wonder if they're repeating the experiences of their parents and grandparents. Our hypothesis at the moment is that parental contact is the most important variable, but how does that then feed into the students' experiences – what creates the effect?

Teacher researcher

The school is planning a residential for mothers and daughters next year and hopes eventually to work with a cohort in primary school so they can 'try to get a shared understanding between mother and child about education and a shared sense of values and engagement back within the school process.'

Senior leader
Successful leadership for promoting the achievement of white working-class pupils. Vignettes: twelve accounts of school life (NCSL, 2008), page 24 (adapted)

Some questions to ask

- Is the school aware of the home context of all its pupils?

- Is there a strong partnership between pupils, school and parents? How is this demonstrated?

- Are there planned meetings specifically for parents of gifted and talented pupils?

- Does the school make good use of the views expressed in parent–pupil questionnaires and interviews?

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Institutional Quality Standards (IQS)

This is an extract from the IQS showing how the school can use one of the five components to ask itself some questions in relation to the framework. These questions will enable the school to focus on provision to support able underachievers in this aspect of its whole-school evaluation and improvement planning.

D – School/College organisation

Leadership	A named member of the governing body, senior management team and the lead professional responsible for Gifted and Talented education have clearly directed responsibilities for motivating and driving gifted and talented provision. The headteacher actively champions gifted and talented provision.	**Responsibility** for gifted and talented provision is **distributed**, and evaluation of its impact shared, at all levels in the school/college. Staff subscribe to policy at all levels. Governors play a significant supportive and evaluative role.	Organisational structures, communication channels and the deployment of staff (e.g. workforce remodelling) are flexible and creative in supporting the delivery of **personalised learning**. Governors take a lead in celebrating achievements of gifted and talented pupils.

- Is there a commitment by the headteacher and senior management team to the importance of addressing underachievement and narrowing the gaps for gifted and talented pupils?
- Are gifted and talented underachievers represented in the school's improvement planning in relation to narrowing the gaps?
- Are there opportunities for joint planning between the G&T leading teacher/coordinator and those responsible for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups?
- Is workforce remodelling developed to provide support for able pupils, e.g. are TAs used to support G&T pupils?

Evidence

Next steps

Policy	The gifted and talented policy is integral to the school/college's inclusion agenda and approach to personalised learning, feeds into and from the single school/college improvement plan and is consistent with other policies.	The policy directs and reflects best practice in the school/college, is regularly reviewed and is clearly linked to other policy documentation.	The policy includes input from the whole school/college community and is regularly refreshed in the light of innovative national and international practice.

- Does the school's inclusion policy recognise that gifted and talented learners may need support in order to access learning that meets their needs?
- Does the school's gifted and talented policy include reference to how the school seeks to prevent, identify and address underachievement?
- Do pupils and parents/carers contribute to review of the school's G&T policy? How does the school ensure that those involved are broadly representative of the school community?
- Does the school carry out research into effective innovation in tackling underachievement, e.g. through What Works Well case studies, G&T e-modules?

Evidence

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School/college ethos and pastoral care	1. The school/college sets high expectations, recognises achievement and celebrates the successes of all its pupils.	1. The school/college fosters an environment which promotes positive behaviour for learning. Pupils are listened to and their views taken into account.	1. An ethos of ambition and achievement is agreed and shared by the whole school/college community. Success across a wide range of abilities is celebrated.
	2. The school/college identifies and addresses the particular social and emotional needs of gifted and talented pupils in consultation with pupils, parents and carers.	2. Strategies exist to counteract bullying and any adverse effects of social and curriculum pressures. Specific support for able underachievers and pupils from different cultures and social backgrounds is available and accessible.	2. The school/college places equal emphasis on high achievement and emotional well-being, underpinned by programmes of support personalised to the needs of gifted and talented pupils. There are opportunities for pupils to use their gifts to benefit other pupils and the wider community.

- How does the school ensure that high expectations of pupils are consistently and clearly communicated?
- Is success in all fields recognised and celebrated?
- Are effort and perseverance rewarded, as well as achievement?
- Are there systems in place to identify the particular social/emotional needs of all pupils, to ensure that information is shared with staff as appropriate, and that consistent strategies are employed to address these?
- Does the school use a range of practices to elicit pupil views about how they can best be supported in their learning, and is their evidence that this impacts on provision?
- Does the curriculum help pupils to develop positive affective learning strategies, e.g. resilience, negotiation skills?

Evidence			
Next steps			
Staff development	1. Staff have received professional development in meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.	1. The induction programme for new staff addresses gifted and talented issues, both at whole-school/college and specific subject/aspect level.	1. There is **ongoing audit of staff needs** and an appropriate range of professional development in Gifted and Talented education. Professional development is informed by research and collaboration within and beyond the school/college.

2. The lead professional responsible for Gifted and Talented education has received appropriate professional development.

2. Subject/aspect and phase leaders have received specific professional development in meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

2. Priorities for the development of Gifted and Talented provision are included within a professional development entitlement for all staff and are monitored through performance management processes.

- Does professional development for staff on Gifted and Talented provision include a focus on able underachievers?
- Are the Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) used to provide a framework for auditing CPD needs?
- Are the benefits for G&T learners flagged in other strands of CPD, e.g. in relation to AfL and APP?
- Has the lead professional had access to guidance on tackling underachievement, e.g. WWW case studies; e-modules; BPAP materials?

Evidence

Next steps

Resources

1. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is supported by appropriate budgets and resources.

1. Allocated resources include school/college-based and nationally available resources, and these have a significant and measurable impact on the progress that pupils make and their attitudes to learning.

1. Resources are used to stimulate innovative and experimental practice, which is shared throughout the school/college and which is regularly reviewed for impact and best value.

- Does the school use data effectively to identify underachievement, and to track the impact of strategies to address this?
- Are specific resources allocated to support strategies to prevent underachievement, including the development of quality first teaching and targeted support for pupils identified as being at risk of underachievement?
- Does the school regularly review the intervention strategies it uses in relation to underachieving G&T pupils, and adjust these to reflect newly identified pupil needs?

Evidence

Next steps

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D – School/College organisation

Generic elements	Entry	Developing	Exemplary
Monitoring and evaluation	1. **Subject and phase audits** focus on the quality of teaching and learning for gifted and talented pupils. Whole-school/college targets are set, using prior **attainment** data.	1. Performance against targets (including at pupil level) is regularly reviewed. Targets include qualitative pastoral and curriculum outcomes as well as numerical data.	1. Performance against targets is rigorously evaluated against clear criteria. Qualitative and quantitative outcomes inform whole-school/college self-evaluation processes.
	2. Elements of provision are planned against clear objectives within effective whole-school self-evaluation processes.	2. All elements, including non-academic aspects of gifted and talented provision, are planned to clear objectives and are subjected to detailed evaluation.	2. The school/college examines and challenges its own provision to inform development of further experimental and innovative practice in collaboration with other schools/colleges.
	• Does the school use the CQS to inform departmental/phase reviews of quality first teaching? • Does the school analyse its historical data in order to address existing patterns of underachievement among able, gifted and talented pupils? • Does the school use a range of pupil level data, including prior attainment at the previous key stage, to ensure that appropriately challenging school targets are set? • Does the school have a tracking system which is able to identify pupils who may be at risk of underachievement in such a way that early intervention can be provided to help them to get back on track? Is data shared widely, including with the G&T leading teacher/coordinator and classroom teachers, and does data analysis impact upon planning to address underachievement at whole-school, department/phase and classroom level?		
Evidence			
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Appendix 2: Example of how a provision map can be used to support discussion of targets and a personalised programme with pupils and parents/carers

Key Stage 2, Primary School C provision map

Area of need: G&T

Name _____   Form _____

Please highlight appropriate provision after discussion with the pupil and parent/carer.

Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
• Morning meetings that merge social, emotional and intellectual learning.	• Focused ability group guided sessions tailored to need (literacy, mathematics).	• One-to-one tuition/coaching to meet identified need via specialist teacher, TA or academic mentor.
• 'Challenge Box' in every classroom to ensure creative use of spare moments.	• In-class small group-specific interest projects.	• Contact with experts via the internet.
• A carefully planned blend of teaching approaches to direct pupils' learning.	• Regular school KS2 withdrawal group: mathematics, philosophy, science.	• Choice of learning pathways.
• Range of questioning styles, including open-ended questions targeted at specific pupils.	• Learning conversations.	• Opportunity to enter poetry, art and sports competitions.
• Opportunities for choice within a task.	• Termly master classes: Term 1 poetry, Term 2 dance, Term 3 the environment.	• Individualised programme of learning.
• Range of grouping arrangements in which G&T pupils are offered opportunities to be both a member and a leader of a group.	• School newspaper team.	• Anger management training.
• Shared target setting.	• Extended day clubs: young engineers, art, drama, music, chess, history, etc.	• Mentoring.
• Peer evaluation and peer support.	• Additional provision (please specify).	• Participation in local schools' G&T network sessions (one day a month).
• Home/school diary.		• Participation in LA arts residential weekend.
		• Participation in LA G&T summer school.
		• Opportunity to attend courses organised by the Regional Partnership or Excellence Hub.
		• Additional provision (please specify).

Target for this term:	Views of child:	Views of parents:
Signed: Teacher	Signed:	Signed:

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Appendix 3: References and further sources of support

For ease of use, links to further information are provided under the section headings used throughout this guidance. Many of the references will, however, be of use in relation to other parts of the document.

Introduction

Gifted and Talented Institutional Quality Standards (IQS)

ygt.dcsf.gov.uk/Content.aspx?contentId=347&contentType=3

Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) guided resource is an on-line tool, to support self-evaluation and improvement in classroom provision, with guidance and exemplification.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search for 'Gifted and Talented: Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) guided resource'.

Gifted and Talented education: Guidance on preventing underachievement – a focus on dual or multiple exceptionality (DME) (00061-2007BKT-EN)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00061-2007BKT-EN'.

Gifted and Talented education: Helping to find and support children with dual or multiple exceptionalities (00052-2008BKT-EN)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00052-2008BKT-EN'.

Gifted and Talented education: Guidance on preventing underachievement: A focus on children and young people in care (00873-2007BKT-EN)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00873-2007BKT-EN'.

Gifted and Talented education: Guidance on preventing underachievement: A focus on exceptionally able pupils (00066-2008BKT-EN)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00066-2008BKT-EN'.

Personalised Learning – A Practical Guide (DCSF-00844-2008) provides guidance for school leaders on all aspects of personalised learning, based on practice that is being developed consistently in schools.

publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00844-2008&

Section 1 Narrowing the gaps in relation to gifted and talented pupils

Breaking the link between disadvantage and low attainment - everyone's business
(DCSF-00357-2009)

www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

Search, using the reference 'DCSF-00357-2009'

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Section 2 Recognising underachievement

Evaluating gifted and talented education: The school improvement partner's role in engaging the school (00016-2009BKT-EN)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00016-2009BKT-EN'.

Identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started (Revised May 2008) **(**DCSF-00367-2008)

ygt.dcsf.gov.uk/Content.aspx?contentId=312&contentType=3

Select the link 'Identifying Gifted and Talented Learners'.

The National Register Portal can provide schools with useful comparative national and regional data relating to the gifted and talented register.

www.cfbt.com/nationalregister

Evaluating School Performance ePD provides guidance, advice and examples to those involved in using data to evaluate and improve school performance.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference 'Evaluating school performance ePD'.

Management Information Systems (MIS) and pupil tracking: users' guidance (00756-2008PDF-EN-02)

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00756-2008'.

Primary assessment for learning information and training materials

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the 'Primary' tab and then 'Assessment for Learning (AfL)' in the assessment section.

Secondary assessment for learning information and training materials, including the report of the Assessment for Learning (AfL) 8 schools project

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the 'Secondary' tab, then 'Assessment for Learning (AfL)' in the assessment section.

Getting to Grips with Assessing Pupils' Progress (DCSF-00129-2009) is a pamphlet, created by the DCSF, containing a three-step guide to Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) and guidance on using APP to benefit pupils.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the title 'Getting to Grips'.

Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) Focus Area brings together useful information, guidance and support materials relating to APP in one central location.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the link 'focus area for Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP)' in the text.

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Section 3 Planning a whole-school approach: ethos and organisation

Primary SEAL Resource

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the 'Primary' tab, then select 'Behaviour, attendance and SEAL' and then 'Primary SEAL'.

Secondary SEAL Resource

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the 'Secondary' tab, then select 'Behaviour, attendance and SEAL' and then 'Secondary SEAL'.

Assessment for Learning: 8 schools' project report (2007) provides examples of the impact of the implementation of AfL strategies in eight secondary schools.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the title 'AfL 8 schools project report'.

Maurin, E. and McNally, S. (2007) *Educational Effects of Widening Access to the Academic Track: A natural experiment.* London: Centre for Economics in Education

Section 4 Planning a whole-school approach: the three-waves model of intervention

Getting there – able pupils who lose momentum in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 (DCSF-00935-2007)

publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00935-2007

Accelerating the progress of able pupils at Key Stage 3 in English, mathematics and science (DCSF-01004-2007)

publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01004-2007&

The Extra Mile – How schools succeed in raising aspirations in deprived communities (DCSF-00447-2008)

publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00447-2008

The Realising Equality and Achievement for Learners (REAL) Project aims to improve the quality of gifted and talented education for pupils from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds and to respond to the particular and urgent needs of gifted and talented learners with English as an additional language (EAL). The website provides access to the REAL Toolkit of resources and approaches.

www.realproject.org.uk

The Learning Conversation is an online training module for those interested in supporting pupils as learners. See the Secondary Intervention: Online training modules, 6 The Learning Conversation.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Select the 'Secondary' tab. Under the 'English' heading select 'Intervention', 'Intervention training modules – Teaching assistants' and then scroll down to 'The learning conversation' near the bottom.

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Developing one-to-one tuition: Guidance for Local Authorities and schools (DCSF-01067-2009)

www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

Search using the reference 'DCSF-01067-2009'

Section 5 Personalising programmes to address underachievement: provision mapping

Leading on Inclusion is a primary resource comprising professional development materials and a CD-ROM designed to encourage schools to take a more strategic approach to managing inclusion by focusing on whole-school development. The resource provides examples of provision maps organised in a variety of ways, and guidance relating to the advantages of different models.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the title 'Leading on inclusion'.

Leading on Intervention is the secondary equivalent of the primary resource 'Leading on Inclusion' and is available on the National Strategies website.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the title 'Leading on intervention'.

The improvement cycle offers further information about the cycle, waves of intervention and provision planning.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/local/ePDs/leading_on_intervention/site/u2/index.htm

Audit Commission/National Strategies VFM AEN/SEN Resource Pack provides examples of provision mapping and monitoring templates.

http://sen-aen.audit-commission.gov.uk

Section 6 Transfer and transition

Gifted and talented e-learning modules, Module 6: Transfer and Transition

www.nationalstrategiescpd.org.uk/course/view.php?id=81

After accepting the entry conditions, select 'Inclusion', 'Gifted and talented e-learning modules' and then select 'Module 6: Transfer and Transition'.

Strengthening transfers and transitions: Partnerships for progress (00083-2008PDF-EN) – the evaluation report from a national action research project.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies

Search, using the reference '00083-2008PDF-EN'.

Primary and secondary self-evaluation diagnostic tools include a specific focus area on transfers and transitions.

www.supportingselfevaluation.org.uk

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Section 7 Parents and the wider community

YG&T in a Nutshell, 5: The parent perspective: involving parents and carers in the education of G&T students provides a 20-minute overview of working in partnership with families.

ygt.dcsf.gov.uk/FileLinks/572_MainLink.pdf

Gifted and talented e-learning modules, Module, 9: Working with parents and carers discusses strategies for working with parents and carers in greater depth and looks at the challenges you might encounter.
It indicates where to go for further reading and support.

www.nationalstrategiescpd.org.uk/course/view.php?id=81

After accepting the entry conditions, select 'Inclusion', 'Gifted and talented e-learning modules' and then select 'Module 9: Working with parents and carers'.

The DCSF Standards site has an area dedicated to parental involvement.

www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/parentalinvolvement

The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) is a charity that advises, supports and provides for the needs of high-ability children, young people and their families. Its helpdesk is available to answer queries from parents and others.

www.nagcbritain.org.uk

Successful leadership for promoting the achievement of white working-class pupils. **Vignettes: twelve accounts of school life** (NCSL, 2008)

www.ncsl.org.uk/publications-index/publications-display.htm?id=29107

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