

RAISING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED PUPILS WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL FRAMEWORK

Guidelines, in Workbook Format, for Schools to Audit and Extend
Existing Best Practice

A case study of best practice in 12 schools that have successfully raised pupil achievement including the Able, Gifted and Talented.

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London Gifted
& Talented 

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

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The overall purpose of the case studies was to highlight the successful and practical strategies that have enabled and, consequently, ensured the transformation of pupil potential into high achievement.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Crucially, major strategies that emerged are as follows:

- 1 Visionary, energetic leadership and responsibility for whole school development is shared amongst teachers, pupils, parents and governors. The feeling of ownership and participation in all decision-making is clearly evident throughout each school.
- 2 The role and responsibilities of the Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator are perceived as a critical influence in all decision-making. Meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils is central to all school planning, arising from the philosophy that 'best practice for able pupils is best practice for all pupils'.
- 3 A carefully fostered inclusive ethos is created within each school, based on the premise that the school needs to create opportunities that will enable all pupils to discover their potentials; and then to celebrate and give equal status to all learners' potentials and achievements across the curriculum.
- 4 Schools use a varied repertoire of qualitative and quantitative strategies for identifying all pupils' strengths and needs. Quantitative measures include; appropriate verbal and non-verbal group tests, SATs levels, class tests and examination results. However, a paramount emphasis is given to teachers' insightful and continuous observation and assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses.
- 5 Detailed attention is given to the procedures for transition between phases of schooling. Designated teachers are responsible for co-ordinating the liaison and communication between schools; and detailed transition reports and portfolios of pupils are fully used by all schools. Extensive use is made of inter- and intra- on-line communication that is regularly updated and constantly referred to.
- 6 Emphasis is given to Assessment for Learning (AfL), not only at transition, but throughout all stages of lesson development. The personalisation of learning with differentiation is negotiated through a strong pupil voice, whereby pupils are directly consulted as to the relevance and challenge of their learning tasks. Care is taken to ensure that pupils have full ownership of their learning and decision-making with regard to their learning paths.

The booklet is designed as a workbook enabling you to reflectively audit your current school practice, annotate/highlight the numbered points and note actions for further development.

- 7 Regular monitoring of pupil progress in order to diagnose any indication of possible underachievement is perceived as essential school practice. This is accomplished through a systematic range of diagnostic procedures involving teachers, pupils, parents/carers. Through regular monitoring and mentoring, together with a strong commitment to listening to pupil voice, pupils are carefully tracked so that early indications of possible underachievement are recognised and immediately dealt with through counselling and re-negotiation of learning tasks.
- 8 All pupils have access to a mentor who is a member of staff and/or an older pupil. Pupils can choose their mentors and also re-negotiate their mentors as different needs arise. Some university students mentor secondary pupils, whilst some secondary pupils take on the mentorship of primary pupils. Pupil mentors can also be experts from the community.
- 9 All schools have an agreed, coherent and carefully targeted plan for whole school development, with parents and governors closely involved in negotiating school targets, and both reflecting on, and also celebrating, the schools' successes. Importantly, pupils are also involved in discussions of schools' ethos and practices and they have active class and school councils with agendas resulting in real action.
- 10 Extensive opportunities for Study Support Activities (out of hours learning), is characteristic of all the schools. Pupils play an active role in suggesting possible activities as well as helping to organise and mentor such activities.

Researchers spent considerable time in each school accessing relevant qualitative and quantitative data: school records and logbooks, SATs results, OFSTED reports, examination results, Quality Standards achievements, NACE Challenge Award achievements, and various evidence of other Performance and Achievement Awards. Researchers observed lessons and interviewed members of the Senior Management, members of staff including Gifted and Talented (G/T) Coordinators, a selection of pupils, parents/carers and governors; and this qualitative information was richly informative, reflecting the dynamic, living research evidence that should lie at the centre of rich case study research.



Throughout this document the case-study researchers recognise and celebrate the combined efforts of staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors; and we wish to thank all the schools involved in this research for their willingness to participate, and their readiness to share their professional experiences and expertise.

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the visionary leadership of the Senior Management Team and the G/T Co-ordinators. They are taking responsible risks and the results are there to be shared by others looking for inspiration and role models.

BURLINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL: *New Malden, Surrey*

- Burlington School is a non-denominational mixed Community School for 7-11 year olds with 360-380 pupils on roll. The pupils represent a wide range of social backgrounds and there is almost 60% of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). 21 different languages are spoken including: English, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati and Korean. Around 20 per cent of pupils enter the school later than the usual time of entry and many speak very little English. An average number of pupils have Special Educational Needs and slightly less than average require school meals.

FARNBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL: *London Borough of Bromley*

- Farnborough is a mixed one-form entry Community school with phased entry into the Reception year. At present there are 220 pupils in the school and 8 members of full-time staff plus the headteacher. The number of pupils on the special needs register is above the national average at 25.4 per cent and the percentage of pupils with statements is 1.8 per cent. The pupils' special needs are mainly in the area of SEBD and speech and communication difficulties. 3.8 per cent of pupils have English as a second language and 10.7 per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The pupils come from homes that are socio-economically diverse and 4.1 per cent are eligible for free school meals.

GRAFTON PRIMARY SCHOOL: *London Borough of Holloway*

- Grafton is an inner city primary school for 450 children from 3 years 6 months to 11 years old. The school is a very diverse community with a rich ethnic mix. The school serves an area whose socio-economic circumstances are much lower than usually found. More than 50% of the pupils are entitled to free school meals and a similar proportion have learning and emotional difficulties with a high number of children experiencing Language and Communication needs. Slightly more than 50% of the pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds; the largest groups being Black African and Caribbean. 60% of the pupils have a first language that is not English, but is predominantly Turkish, Somali, Bengali, Spanish and Italian. Translators and translations are widely available including Spanish and Italian.

HERMITAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL: *West Berkshire*

- Hermitage School is a smaller than the average, but expanding, rural primary school in Newbury, West Berkshire. There is a small ethnic and cultural mix with negligible numbers of pupil on free school meals. 20% of the pupils are identified as SEN, many of whom fall in the Asperger's Autistic Spectrum; some of these pupils may also be identified as Gifted or Talented. Parents set high expectations for their children, but in doing so support the school in a variety of ways. Ofsted (2002) labelled the school as an 'underachieving school' due to standards of attainment. Pupils entered the school with attainment above average and left with standards only average. The inspection report considered that more could be done to raise attainment at the top end of the ability range. The school addressed this and has since achieved the NACE Challenge Award for whole-school excellence in provision for able, gifted and talented pupils.

LOWES WONG JUNIOR SCHOOL: *Southwell, Nottinghamshire*

- Lowes Wong Anglican Methodist School is a large junior school in the small market town of Southwell. It serves a mixed, but relatively prosperous catchment area with currently 398 pupils on roll. There are only a few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, but it is an inclusive school. Lowes Wong Junior is a high achieving school with a long-standing reputation for high expectations and achievements. Although the percentage of children with special needs is low, the school has been very successful in meeting the needs of children who struggle with their learning or behaviour. The provision for the most able and talented pupils has greatly improved under the leadership of the present head teacher, who has been involved in curriculum development and training in able children's education. The school's major strengths are music, dance, drama and sport.

OLLERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL: *Nottinghamshire*

- Ollerton Primary School has 300 pupils from Foundation to Year 6. Recently re-organised, it serves the ex-mining communities within one of the most disadvantaged wards within Nottinghamshire. There is high unemployment and high levels of social deprivation: nearly 50% of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and the number of pupils who are on the special needs register is well above the national average. There is high pupil mobility and a significant number of looked after children with complex needs. There is a minority ethnic and cultural mix; and no pupils with English as a second language. The attainment of pupils on entry to full time schooling is well below the local authority average for both literacy and numeracy. All pupils make good progress and the standards achieved by pupils are high in relation to similar schools and are improving steadily when compared to all schools.

PORTSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL: *Southampton*

- Portswood School is a mixed primary school of 400 pupils, serving a diverse population with 70% of the students coming from out of catchment area. Pupils come from widely varying communities ranging from areas with high levels of social deprivation to a range of affluent villages. The school population has a diverse cultural mix with over 17 languages represented, with English, a second or additional language for 42% of the pupils. The school sees this cultural diversity as enriching the lives of all its pupils whose attainment on entry to the reception is above the national and local averages. Those pupils identified as having special educational needs is below the national average. 36% of pupils on the able register have English as an additional language. The school has achieved the NACE Challenge Award.



HOMEWOOD AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE ARTS COLLEGE: Tenterden, Kent

- Homewood School is a non-denominational mixed Foundation school for 11-18 year olds with Specialist status in Performing Arts and Art. It has 2082 pupils on roll and falls within the Comprehensive System in Kent. Homewood School applies its own entry criteria: all pupils applying to the school are assessed and 20% are admitted 'with reference to their aptitude and ability'. The remaining 80% of pupils are admitted 'without reference to their aptitude and ability'. Four pupils are admitted to Year 7 on the basis of exceptional musical ability (Grade 4 or above, instrumental / voice). There are less than average pupils with Special Educational Needs, but there is a broad social demographic since the school sits within a comprehensive system inside a selective county.

LAMPTON SCHOOL: London Borough of Hounslow

- Lampton School provides a mixed, comprehensive education to a truly multicultural population of 1382 pupils ranging in age from 11 to 18. This figure includes 315 pupils in the Sixth Form. It is now a very popular school and is oversubscribed with at least 150 applicants who have not secured places for September 2007 and who may appeal, seeking a place at this community school. Ten years ago it only attracted about 107 applications for 210 places in Year Seven. The majority of the pupils come from four world religions: Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. Their last OFSTED report comments on the positive relationships throughout the school. Other key indicators describing the school are as follows: 21% Free School Meals; 3.2% Statemented; 14.5% School Action (SEN); 3.2% School Action Plus; 78.1% Minority Ethnic Pupils; 66.8% EAL (English as an Additional Language) stages 1-4.

NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS: London Borough of Bromley

- Newstead Wood is a Foundation, Selective, 11-18 Engineering Specialist School with a particular focus on the application of science, mathematics and technology. About 750 pupils apply each year, and 130 are given places based on their Verbal Reasoning and Non-verbal Reasoning scores. Newstead Wood accommodates over 950 pupils from 60 Primary schools. The school has a rich and diverse student body that places great emphasis on racial equality and social justice. Thirty five percent of the pupils are from various ethnic minorities. It never excludes pupils which is exceptional.

SEVEN KINGS HIGH SCHOOL: London Borough of Redbridge, Ilford

- Seven Kings High School is a six form entry, 11-18, coeducational, mixed ability, multi-ethnic, comprehensive school with about 1440 pupils on roll of whom about 470 are in the Sixth Form. It is designated by the DCSF as a specialist school for Science and Technology, Modern Foreign Languages and it is also a Training School. In 1999 it became a Beacon school and since 2003 it is designated as one of the new Leading Edge Programme schools with a special responsibility for pupils with physical disability. Around 70 to 80 languages are spoken throughout the school.

ST MARYLEBONE SCHOOL: London Borough of Westminster

- St Marylebone School is an 11-18 comprehensive Church of England school for girls, with mixed entry post 16. The catchment area officially covers 18 London boroughs. However, the majority of students are drawn from the local area comprising 30 primary schools which include widely varying communities representing a diverse ethnic and cultural mix, including a high percentage of students from European countries. Over 30 languages are represented in the school. English is a second or additional language for more than 50% of the students. The Central London Learning Skills Council identifies the school's catchment area as one of the most deprived nationally. Around 40% of students are entitled to free school meals.

In all schools included in the case-study, the following characteristics of democratic leadership were evident:

- 1 All schools promote and emphasise equal opportunity, racial equality, multi-lingualism and social justice, with the Headteacher and Senior Management Team providing both vision and practical support for teacher and pupil development.
- 2 All the participating schools view the G/T Agenda as central to their whole school development: maintaining a policy of Inclusion through Opportunity.
- 3 All Senior Management, teachers, parents, governors and pupils work as a dynamic team to regularly reflect upon, and to change if necessary, any aspect of the schools' functioning that is perceived to require complete remodelling in some cases, or minor adjustment in others. The ethos of the school derives from a strong commitment to Reflective Practice with the underpinning belief that teachers are truly professional and understand clearly the dynamic relationship between learning and teaching.
- 4 The pupil voice is strong and has considerable influence on both school decisions and also on issues of personal development. Pupils are encouraged and feel confident that they can discuss any aspect of their schooling with both teachers and the Senior Management Team. Learning is personalised and carefully monitored; pupils perceive that teachers' expectations of their achievements are high and they respond to this positively.
- 5 Parents/Carers have open access to the school and feel they are valued and listened to: they feel they can approach any member of the Senior Management or member of staff if they need to discuss an issue; they are involved in school activities, are consulted and kept informed about all school policy and intended future development. They have a sense of both ownership and partnership and are proud of the school's efforts and achievements.
- 6 Governors are aware of the school's G/T policy and practice and are active supporters. They also have a strong voice and take pride in the school's accomplishments.
- 7 There is well-developed and on-going involvement with the community: outside expertise is welcomed and is a major part of school development.

- 1 The staff, pupils, parents/carers and governors are fully committed to a school policy that promotes inclusion, in the sense that equal opportunities are provided for all pupils to discover their strengths and talents. The processes of identification are perceived as tools to recognise all pupils' abilities and strengths.
- 2 Good practice for G/T students is regarded as good practice for all students in that good practice stems from a child-centred and enquiry-based curriculum. All students need the skills of learning how to learn: for example, problem-solving and thinking skills, self-assessment and self-monitoring skills, questioning, recording and research skills.
- 3 Equal status is given to all subjects across the curriculum together with a wide range of activities outside the curriculum. Schools have an 'open door' policy in that all pupils have access to enrichment and extension opportunities. Teachers guide some pupils directly to try activities they think would enrich and extend a pupil's strengths and potential ability. All activities are acknowledged and celebrated.
- 4 A high priority is placed upon the pupils managing their own and each other's behaviour, and on them becoming independent and self-disciplined learners within a framework of mutual respect and tolerance.



- 1 Approximately 5 to 10% of every year group is identified as Gifted (Language, Mathematics and Sciences) and Talented (across the full range of the Creative Arts), but the G/T register is kept open and flexible to accommodate pupils who, through enhanced opportunities, discover potential gifts and talents.
- 2 Detailed identification and nomination procedures, both quantitative and qualitative, result in teachers' thinking about all students' learning needs. Improving the education of the exceptionally able is seen to benefit the whole school community by raising standards of provision, and expectations for the achievements of all students.
- 3 The use of data to examine cultural and ethnic bias in selection has been important in raising other questions such as identifying those students who might be at a disadvantage.
- 4 A wide range of quantitative and qualitative procedures are constantly updated and shared across all subjects with the emphasis on obtaining and diagnostically assessing the whole profile of the learner; cognitive, affective and physical.

PRIMARY

The following procedures inter alia are used:

- 1 At Early Years and Foundation levels, the quality of teacher observation is considered of primary importance, with the emphasis on identifying pupil progress from their base-line assessment on entry. The emphasis is on providing learners with rich opportunities for experiential learning and interaction across the Learning Areas.
- 2 As learners progress, teacher assessment through tracking continues using: Local Authority models; National Curriculum levelling and target setting for individuals and groups; Test results using SATs (statutory and optional); and NFER non-verbal and verbal reasoning tests. In Years 4 and 5 Cognitive Ability Tests are administered. The Target Tracker package is also used. Continuous monitoring of attainment; Observation on the curriculum task; Observations and results from extended opportunities and partner projects are key strategies.
- 3 An important emphasis is given to qualitative procedures throughout the primary stage: a comprehensive picture is built up of each child's progress and performance by a rigorous process of continuous assessment through observation, careful record keeping and collation of evidence including samples of pupils' work, discussion with colleagues, pupils and parents/carers.
- 4 Evidence from all these sources is used in regular pupil review processes to ensure that the provision is effective, inclusive and individualised, and that the support offered meets the needs of all the children. These processes also engage staff in a continuous cycle of self-reflection and development. Any discrepancy between a pupil's targets and performance is investigated, and appropriate intervention is diagnosed and agreed with the pupil.
- 5 The Headteacher, Assessment co-ordinator, G/T co-ordinator, SENCO and class teacher carry out testing on individual pupils as necessary.

SECONDARY

The following procedures inter alia are used:

- 1 All the secondary schools in the research study maintain close links with the feeder primary schools, and primary records are fully investigated. Pupils complete a form detailing their interests before arriving in Year 7.
- 2 To assess attainment and progress, schools use standardised test results: SATs on entry; MIDYIS tests for Year 7; SATs for Key Stage 3; YELLIS for Year 10 and ALIS for Year 12; Cognitive Ability Tests - a score of 126 or above in one battery or 120 or above in two batteries; Level 8 in Mathematics or a Level 8 teacher assessment; UK Maths Challenge - Gold Award. GCSE results are also used - a points score of 58 or above in the best eight subjects (where A* = 8, A=7, B=6 etc).
- 3 Teacher observation in a particular subject is considered vital to the identification process, especially where perceived potential is not demonstrated in assessment scores. Mentors play an important role in this procedure. Also evidence of outstanding achievement in an academic or creative arts activity pursued outside school is considered, e.g. success in a national-level chess or debating competition or outstanding performance in a master-class, Aimhigher or a gifted and talented programme.



1. EMPHASIS ON SEAMLESS TRANSITION

The following procedures inter alia are used:

- 1 Pupil progress is monitored from the baseline point of entry. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and the G/T register are regularly reviewed and then transferred between the phases.
- 2 There is excellent liaison between the schools at every stage of transition through detailed reports of pupils' achievements regarding in-school and out-of-school activities, examples of pupils' work, and both quantitative and qualitative comments on pupils' strengths and on areas needing support. These reports are made available to, and discussed by, all staff so that repetition of skills and mastery of knowledge is avoided.
- 3 Secondary staff are aware of the G/T pupils before they arrive: this enables teachers to do forward planning to address individual needs, building upon the profiles of information that pupils have acquired prior to and after arrival. The transition profiles inform group and individual lesson planning and schemes of work.
- 4 Pupils complete a form detailing their interests before arriving in Year 7; and parents/carers also contribute to this sharing of advanced information for G/T pupils in Year 6 and after arrival in Year 7.
- 5 Designated staff carry specific responsibilities for data acquisition, maintenance, security and information dissemination as and where appropriate. Extensive school IT facilities support this work. Transition booklets, work examples, induction days and computer data transfer are characteristic of all schools.
- 6 There are active partnerships between universities, secondary and primary schools and, some Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils engage in work placements in primary schools. A wide range of workshops are presented by secondary schools who are also involved in mentoring projects.
- 7 Schools provide opportunities for the parents/carers to receive information regarding secondary schools; hold information evenings and ensure that parents/carers make visits to the schools of their choice. Regular reminders are sent home to encourage parents/carers to attend meetings and make visits.
- 8 There are curriculum evenings to ensure that parents/carers are well informed of what is expected of the children for SATs, but equally how to prepare their children for secondary schools. Once the children have been allocated a place, schools arrange to meet with the secondary school SENCOs, to provide information about those pupils who may have a special educational need.
- 9 Where the transition information available to the secondary schools is relatively limited due to a large number of feeder schools, the secondary schools have developed detailed systems for collecting, collating and analysing data on student progress.
- 10 Pupils complete a form detailing their interests before arriving in Year 7.

2. MONITORING POTENTIAL UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The following strategies inter alia are used:

- 1 The G/T Co-ordinator is a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), with an overview of development, and is dedicated, informed and influential throughout the school. At primary level, all staff are involved directly in discussion with the SMT including the G/T Coordinator. At secondary level, each department has a person responsible for guiding and monitoring the overall provision for G/T pupils and also for monitoring the individual progress of G/T pupils; this person is in close communication with teachers, parents, pupils and the SMT.
- 2 Differentiated provision is perceived as integral to whole school planning and the result of complex knowledge construction rather than simple knowledge dissemination: as such, differentiation is not a series of 'bolt-on' exercises added without coherence and sound educational rationale. All schemes of work are required to indicate well-planned extension activities. Pupils who are assessed as needing personal extension activities beyond the national curriculum, can negotiate personalised learning activities.
- 3 The progress, achievements and needs of every child are reviewed in detail on a regular basis by the Headteacher, the SENCO, Heads of Year or Departments, and the class teacher, and individual action plans and targets are set. Parents/Carers are kept informed and can also request consultations with Senior Management and members of staff.
- 4 The pupils are well involved in the decision-making processes in the school. There are regular Class Council meetings, School Council meetings and a Headteacher's suggestion box.
- 5 Collaborative, networked e-learning is well advanced and being constantly extended. Differentiation for the more able is targeted on offering more cognitive challenge to develop problem-solving and thinking skills, higher order thinking and questioning skills. This is backed by an extensive range of lunchtime, after-hours and out-of-school clubs, learning opportunities and master classes.
- 6 At primary and secondary level, mixed ability and setting are employed differentially across the curriculum, not to label pupils, but in order to facilitate differentiation and personalised learning.
- 7 Teaching and non-teaching staff receive planned and in-depth Continuing Professional Development with regard to: continuous and systematic differentiation of learning activities; problem-solving and thinking skills and higher order questioning, with guidance on how to implement these into lesson planning; accommodation of different learning styles; and assessment (both formative and summative) with careful monitoring of progress in teaching and learning.
- 8 All schools provide an extensive range of out-of-hours learning opportunities: some pupils are guided to participate, but the activities are open to any pupil who shows an interest. This is regarded as another avenue for the identification of pupil potential and is in line with the philosophy of Identification through Provision.



- 9 In some secondary schools, a shortened KS3 programme has required a complete re-write of the Years 7 and 8 curriculum, resulting in tighter, more efficient and dynamic teaching and more productive learning experiences. This has consequently freed up the Year 9 curriculum, allowing schools to introduce new learning experiences and methods of working. This has significantly raised the energy and motivation levels for staff and students alike.
- 10 Thinking about the needs of all students has resulted in staff thinking more creatively about how they approach their teaching. In-service training has also encouraged the development of thinking skills, questioning skills, research skills, active learning approaches and skills for independent learning.
- 11 Extension topics are built into all subjects and are used for most lessons. Each school's Gifted and Talented Handbook of Policy and Practice provides extensive guidance on how to differentiate learning tasks, and each secondary subject department is responsible for outlining the strategies that are used to ensure that each student is working at the appropriate level.
- 12 Multiple criteria and sources of evidence are used to identify exceptional pupils and schools closely monitor how identification and subsequent teaching interventions are working and having a measurable impact across year-groups, subjects and departments. Students are encouraged to be involved in these processes
- 13 Schools are expected to self-assess against National Quality Standards and they do this through an audit that constantly refines their procedures. Many schools use the NACE Challenge Award Framework which shows them how to develop practice. Staff do not see the G/T work as a 'bolt on' feature to be addressed when time permits, but as an integral part of the whole teaching process. The national curriculum framework is personalised in terms of day to day teaching and the production of regular progress reports and target setting with pupils at least once a term.
- 14 Staff look very closely at any discrepancy between a pupil's targets and current performance. If a pupil is underperforming there is serious conversation that attempts to identify a good intervention such as finding a mentor, examining the problems within the work, or altering expectations or work styles. There is also a very close review of schemes of work within years and departments.
- 15 The personalising is particularly relevant if a pupil is not making progress against set targets. Here schools engage in a dialogue to elucidate what needs to be changed. The pupils feel that their teachers are fully engaged with them in both group and individual school activities and that staff always have time to listen and to talk. The parents/carers reflect the same personalised aspects to the learning. Written records and computer databases back up this communication so no one 'slips through the net.' The Senior Leadership Team are vigilant with regards to a systems G/T approach and they take an interest in any area where there is vulnerability or risk of underachievement.
- 16 Every year the department team and every teacher is challenged to see that individual pupils are set realistic, contractual and negotiated performance targets that personalise the learning, identify who takes responsibility and guarantee a conversation that reviews progress and addresses complications. The students feel empowered and motivated as major stakeholders rather than as passive school attenders. Everyone has a personal challenge and the opportunity to succeed across a very wide range of activities in and outside of school.
- 17 When underachievement is identified, the meeting between the pupil and the teacher is the appropriate venue to explore one of a variety of interventions that might result in a new approach to learning, new avenues of support from staff, peers and families, new work and homework strategies and incentives, new expectations, new targets and the booking of further meetings as and when necessary. Parents/Carers can become involved when necessary but the emphasis is upon nurturing the independence of the pupil and the promotion of an adult model of education. Students are expected to maintain a portfolio of achievement which incorporates reports.
- 18 A few pupils may be targeted as candidates for additional staff attention and intervention where this is deemed valuable. Sometimes it has to be acknowledged that the cause of some underachievement can lie within personal circumstances outside the control of the school. In these cases counselling is available both within the school and externally.
- 19 When a trend is noted within a group, then staff collaborate and look to group solutions like reorganising schedules of work, raising expectations, lowering anxieties, revisiting year and departmental policies and resources, providing staff training and staff support and instigating research to further elucidate the cause of the underachievement. The staff take proactive measures to prevent or minimise underachievement before it happens. The SMT are constantly assessing the impact of all school policies with vulnerable pupils and they take preventative action where it is felt to be warranted.
- 20 The personalising is particularly relevant if a pupil is not making progress against set targets. Here schools engage in a dialogue to elucidate what needs to be changed. The pupils feel that their teachers are fully engaged with them in both group and individual school activities. The parents/carers reflect the same personalised aspects to the learning.
- 21 Written records and computer databases back up this communication so no one slips through the net. The Senior Leadership Team are vigilant with regards to a systems G/T approach and they take an interest in any area where there is vulnerability or risk of underachievement.
- 22 Once the G/T pupils are identified and their work is monitored, the staff reflect on how challenged pupils are both in the classroom and outside the classroom. G/T pupils agree their targets, and in the regular meetings with their teachers they can look at the congruence between what has been expected academically in terms of targets, and what has been accomplished in a manner that relies on hard evidence and teachers' opinions. Sometimes targets need to be reviewed and possibly modified.
- 23 Target grades are established for every student. In Year 10, 11, 12 and 13 exam grades are checked against target grades, and departments have to explain how they are challenging underachievement.
- 24 Membership of Young, Gifted and Talented, previously the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) is highly promoted and regarded as an essential opportunity for G/T pupils to meet others of like abilities, and to experience high-level challenge both across the usual curriculum areas and, importantly, in new areas of exploration and discovery.



3. STATUS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF G/T COORDINATOR AND SUPPORT NETWORKS

- 1 The status of the G/T Coordinator is one of central and senior importance with high level influence on whole school policies with regard to processes of identification and strategies for provision. The G/T Coordinator liaises closely with, or is a member of, the Senior Management Team. The designated person is well-informed about Gifted and Talented Education, and has a good overview of heads of years' or departments' policies and practice. Importantly, channels for communication are clear and quickly responsive.
- 2 Sometimes, however, the role of the G/T Coordinator is subsumed into an overall school policy led by the Headteacher, and supported by the Heads of Years, Curriculum Heads, and the whole staff as a team: regular school-based monitoring and regular lesson observation is an important element of this policy. The Headteacher and the G/T Coordinator analyse the learning outcomes for the identified pupils and set targets for, and with, them. The outcomes are monitored by gender, ethnicity, special educational needs and stages of language acquisition.
- 3 In some primary schools, the role of the G/T coordinator is included in the work of the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and this role is central to the raising of the achievement of all the pupils.
- 4 The G/T coordinator, or another designated person, is expected to give the G/T a very strong emphasis across the whole school community. S/he is expected to lead by example, to demonstrate high level teaching skills, and to set high expectations amongst the teachers and pupils.
- 5 The drive for continuing improvement is supported by good self-evaluation processes which support the creation of the school improvement plan and inform future training needs. Senior leaders and subject coordinators are clear about their roles and responsibilities in leading the provision in their areas for able and talented pupils.
- 6 In all instances, pupils are closely involved in evaluating the relevance and appropriate challenges of their learning targets.
- 7 All schools have a well-developed strategy for in-service staff development, and updating this programme arises naturally from the pupil review sessions where pupil, staff and school needs are identified. Here agendas are raised and targets set and built into the school development plan.
- 8 All the primary schools belong to their local Primary Learning Network. Where appropriate, the cluster includes the local secondary school. There are regular staff development and cluster meetings to underpin shared projects, and initiatives are closely monitored through teacher and pupil self-assessment questionnaires.
- 9 Some schools produce a pupil proforma for Assessment and Review of Learning: it comprises of a column for strengths and needs in the autumn term; a review column at the beginning of the spring term with and a box to write the agreed forward targets; followed by spring and summer reviews to consider progress and future needs.
- 10 Secondary departments are also additionally responsible for monitoring the progress of students they have nominated for their subject G/T register, for checking regularly on their interests and needs, and for providing extension and enrichment activities. All departments receive copies of the students' Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and the G/T co-ordinator meets every student on the school's G/T main register to discuss their progress, to draw up a new IEP and to agree targets for the term.
- 11 Schools produce comprehensive practical handbooks which provide guidance for staff on: assessing learning; identifying different learning styles, planning for differentiation; planning for creative problem-solving; and, examples of lesson plans. All schools have developed induction for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), and fully explanatory handbooks for parents and governors. Parents/carers must all sign a Home and School Agreement, which focuses on the children's needs and highlights what the school expects of the parents/carers.
- 12 Schools are expected to assess themselves against the National Quality Standards (NQS), to review their plans, to set new targets each year and to report back to the G/T coordinator, or designated person, who ascertains what further steps are to be taken with developing the G/T agenda. Many use the NACE Challenge Award Framework to audit and develop their practice.
- 13 London schools are actively involved with the London Gifted and Talented group (LGT) and all schools were involved with the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Students, now Young, Gifted and Talented.



4. ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

- 1 Through systematic assessment, record keeping, and liaison with the children's previous teachers, effective planning avoids repetition of skills and knowledge already mastered. Challenges through high quality tasks are provided so that there is always differentiated work and extension material available. By assessing performance on these tasks it is then possible to set individuals more challenging targets.
- 2 Through the differentiation, extension and enrichment strategies in lessons, teachers are able to use curriculum based assessment to extend the pupils' range of skills and to further develop the cognitive stretch in targeting thinking and questioning skills.
- 3 Pupils are allowed to make choices about areas of study and to organise their own work. They are expected to carry out tasks that stretch their capabilities and help develop their abilities to evaluate and check their work. Pupils set their own targets and monitor their own progress through self-assessment and marking each other's work.
- 4 The pupil review process enables all aspects of each child's progress and attainment to be considered, with the sharing of ideas and decision-making for relevant action to intervene as necessary. This process also engages staff in a continuous cycle of self-reflection and development. This is supported by team teaching and teaching partners.
- 5 Teachers and pupils engage in constructive educational dialogue and communicate frequently about academic tasks, motivation, anxieties, projects, challenges, work-life balance, personal research, personal work portfolios, extracurricular activities, work styles, homework management, course options choices, careers guidance, etc. Students are active participants within these conversations and they realise that they need to prepare and to account for what they are doing.
- 6 Through the power of being given ownership of their learning paths, pupils attribute success and failure to their own decision-making rather than blaming other factors like the teachers or the curriculum. Pupils value opportunities to negotiate with staff and to use their own initiative: what they think and believe in terms of their own self-assessments, critical reflections and target settings predominate.
- 7 The intention is that assessment shows progression within each subject and that this information is shared with pupils and parents/carers. Pupil self-assessment complements other types of assessment, and encourages students to carry personal responsibility for their progress. Teachers use both Assessment for Learning (formative assessment) and Assessment of Learning (summative assessment.) Written commentaries in pupils' books provide evidence of personalised learning through comments about possible avenues for improvement under the influence of AfL principles.
- 8 Teachers see assessing work with carefully orchestrated feedback to pupils, as a key opportunity to challenge G/T pupils and to ask more high level questions that probe for a better understanding of what a given pupil has learned, and where perhaps the pupil might need specific tuition. They see close links between AfL, the promotion of the National Quality Standards (NQS) and use of NACE Challenge Award Framework in G/T education. Peer assessments are also promoted and highly valued.

5. OUT-OF-HOURS LEARNING

- 1 The extent and variety of the extra-curricular programme of opportunities is impressive. For example; during a school week there could be a choice of between 5 and 10 activities during the school lunch-hour and between 7 and 20 after school. These include a wide variety of music groups (choirs, jazz, wind and African drumming bands), dance groups, drama groups, art clubs, sport and fitness clubs, to foreign language groups, subject-specific clubs (including Latin), astro-physics, computing, creative-writing, reading, accountancy and homework clubs. Some of these, such as the jazz workshops, were developed as a result of discussions held between the G/T co-ordinator and students on the G/T register.
- 2 The choice of activities outside the National Curriculum is overwhelming. Some take place during noon hours, some after school and some on weekends or during school holidays. Sports include: aerobics, badminton, fencing, basketball, skiing, gym, rounders, hockey, squash, tennis, table tennis, swimming, volleyball and trampolining. Clubs and societies include Arguers Anonymous, art, Bar Mock Trials Groups, British Association of Young Scientists, chess, cultural arts, dance, debating, drama, engineering, English, environment, history, LINC – now called The Real World, and emphasis on developing world issues, media, music, politics, psychology, science and mathematics and Model United Nations. The clubs and societies tend to be run by sixth form pupils which provide leadership opportunities and further experience of group work and democratic peer led procedures.
- 3 There is an emphasis on the early identification of a range of skills across all domains, and the extra-curricular opportunities are open to all, though some students may be actively encouraged to join if staff consider they might boost a student's motivation.
- 4 Out of school events are organised to involve as many parents/carers as possible and all staff attend the community events and meetings. This includes Family and Harvest suppers when each family brings one dish to share. They are also invited to the weekly class assemblies and general celebrations. Bi-lingual support and translators are provided for all formal parent/carer evenings and events.
- 5 Day trips, residential visits, competitions, exhibitions, cluster activities, concerts are used to extend horizons and for team building.
- 6 Engaging in video-conferences with links to universities is a popular activity eg. the Salters Festival of Chemistry and the enthusiasm noted for forensic investigations.



PRIMARY

BURLINGTON JUNIOR SCHOOL

- Standards in Year 6 are above average with pupils having made good progress since starting in Year 3. The quality of teaching and learning is good, and overall standards of leadership and management are very good. Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.
- In terms of attainment, results are clearly above the national average and slightly above the local average considering the demographic of the school. Destination schools for children in this competitive borough compare well with other primary provision. The most impressive achievement however, is the value that is added to pupils' development through attending Burlington. With a large proportion of children with EAL, a value of added score of 100.9 (2005) is excellent.

FARNBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL: Orpington, London Borough of Bromley

- The school is recognised in the OFSTED inspection report of May 2004 as an increasingly effective school with standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 well above national averages. The school has received a range of awards such as Activemark (2005), Healthy School Award (2005), SEED Challenge (2004) for improvement and expansion to the building; and Investors in People (re issued in 2006); Environment Awards (2006) Kent and National winners of grow a sunflower competition. It is an Accredited Partnership Training School with the University of Greenwich.

GRAFTON PRIMARY SCHOOL: London Borough of Islington

- Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Despite this the school was identified in its OFSTED inspection as 'an exceptional school. The individual child is at the centre of all it does. ... achievement is outstanding'.
- According to the inspectors, from very low starting points in the Foundation Stage, the children make very good progress although the standards are still below the expected level when they enter Year One. By the end of Year 6 the pupils' standards are above average in English, well above average in mathematics and high in science. The development in thinking skills in mathematics was noted as a particular strength.
- The school was a former Beacon school; it has Investors in People accreditation, holds the Quality in Study Support award, the Arts Mark Gold award, and in addition is a member of the Creative Partnerships for London East.

HERMITAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL: West Berkshire

- Over the last four years the situation has changed dramatically since the Ofsted report (2002) classified the school as 'underachieving school' due to standards of attainment, particularly with regard to G/T pupils.
- Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 now consistently achieve above national averages at Level 3 in English and in mathematics. In mathematics they are in the top 5% nationally. Pupils at the end Key Stage 2 at Level 5 perform well above the national average in English and mathematics. In science assessments outcomes put the school in the top 5% nationally. This has been due to a strong focus on raising the expectations of staff, particularly in regard to high attaining pupils.

LOWES WONG JUNIOR SCHOOL: Southwell, Nottinghamshire

- Lowes Wong pupils achieve well in the SATs tests at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2006 40.7% achieved Level 4 in English and 58.4% achieved Level 5. In maths, the number achieving Level 4 was lower (29.7%), but a very high number of pupils achieved Level 5 (57.1). In science the pattern was similar to maths with 26.3% achieving Level 4, but 71.4% achieving Level 5. The headteacher believes these results are achieved not only through good teaching but because pupils work hard and enjoy their learning.

OLLERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL: Nottinghamshire

- Through their pupil tracking procedures, the school can show how, from identification, through to the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP), that they are having a measurable impact on pupil attainment and able pupils make good progress.
- The data suggests that Ollerton Primary is meeting the needs of all its pupils. The school achieves well at all levels despite a high level of entitlement to free school meals, above average number of pupils on the SEN register and a relatively high mobility rate. When Ollerton's standards are judged against similar schools standards in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 & 2 are above average, and are in line in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicate that standards are above average. The proportion of pupils who achieve the higher levels in the national tests is close to the national average for reading and writing and in line for maths and science at both key stages. When compared to similar schools however the figures for all indicators are above the national averages. This shows that the school is effective in meeting the needs of its high attaining pupils.

PORTSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL: Southampton, Hants

- In 1997 Ofsted recognised the school as being an underachieving, coasting school with provision for more able pupils being a key issue. Attainment of pupils at level 3 at the end of Key Stage 1 was in line with local and national averages. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment at level 5 was also average. The 2001 inspection report, however, praised the provision for gifted and talented and recent accolades have been received from NAGTY, NACE and the local education authority. In 2001 the school achieved Beacon status in recognition of its leadership and teaching which today are directly responsible for the currently high standards of pupils both academically and socially. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 are now above average, with results at the end of Key Stage 2 improving year on year, moving from average to them now being amongst the top 5% of all schools nationally.
- For a school with such a diverse intake and a high percentage of children for whom English is an additional language, progress made is well above average. Attainment levels for pupils identified as gifted and talented have been steadily rising. Value added data also indicates that Portswood achieves exceptionally well, especially for high attainers.



SECONDARY

HOMWOOD AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE ARTS COLLEGE:

Tenterden, Kent

- In 2003, Ofsted reported the following:
‘This innovative and forward thinking school effectively gives a large number of students a good education which they enjoy and appreciate. Leadership is very good and the management of this complex organisation is very efficient. Teaching is good overall and during the inspection many very good and excellent lessons were seen. GCSE results are above average and have improved since the last inspection. Taking all the above factors, and the above average income per student into account, the school gives good value for money.’
- Most impressive is the value added to pupil development in the initial years in the school, which is maintained throughout. Pupils achieve around one grade above the average that would be predicted for the school entry profile by the time of GCSE and this lead starts at around Year 8, although achievements in Year 7 are also on the rise. A-level exam results are good. KS3 is completed in two years. Students can take GCSE, AGCSE, BTEC, prevocational and vocational courses, A Level etc.
- Exam results show a significant improvement over recent years, with has been a rise of 8% since 2001 in the number of students achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent (in 2005, 61%). 98% achieve 5+ A*-G grades (up 8% since 2001).

LAMPTON SCHOOL: London Borough of Hounslow

- Examination results for the whole school over a period of years showing good progression over time can be found within the Ofsted report on pages 6, 7, 10, 11, 42 and 43. The 5A*-C GCSE figures for more recent years are as follows: 2003 52%; 2004 57%; 2005 53%; 2006 69%. It has been designated as a Specialist Humanities College; It has won a DCSF Achievement award; It has achieved the Investors in People designation; It has been granted Leading Edge status; It is designated as an Enterprise Learning Pathfinder School; It has won Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards; It is designated as a Training School which supports the development of future teachers; It has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and an Artsmark from the Arts Council; It participates in the Future Leaders Programme. The track record of evidence in achieving high standards is adequately addressed within the school's website and the previously mentioned 2005 Ofsted report covering Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. This information is competently used to target staff efforts at constant improvements.

NEWSTEAD WOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS:

Orpington, London Borough of Bromley

- This is an outstandingly successful school which has many excellent features. Standards are very high and improving yearly as a result of very good teaching. The school makes outstanding provision for its gifted and talented pupils; Academic standards are very high in all subjects; Pupils have excellent attitudes to their studies; Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent; Leadership and management are very good; the school enriches its curriculum with an excellent range of extracurricular activities. OFSTED 2003.
- By any measure the school starts with a strong student body and adds value to their education which produces outstanding results regardless of how achievement is measured. The GCSE and A Level results for 2005-2007 and previous years can be found at: <http://www.newsteadwood.bromley.sch.uk/appendix1.html>
- Newstead Wood has the highest entry figures for Oxbridge in the London area. This is not achieved by reputation alone but by concerted efforts on the part of the staff and the pupils over a period of years.

SEVEN KINGS HIGH SCHOOL: London Borough of Redbridge, Ilford

- The school celebrates an impressive array of academic credentials and what has been accomplished can be assessed on the schools website at: <http://www.skhs.net/>
- Following last year's superb A-level results, pupils and teachers at Seven Kings High School are again celebrating as the school achieved outstanding GCSE results, gaining excellent grades and achieving quite an amazing score for students gaining 5A* - C grade or more.
- An amazing 92% of pupils have achieved at least 5 A - C grades at GCSE, continuing the tremendously high standard that has been achieved in recent years, results that have seen Seven Kings recognised as one of Britain's top comprehensive schools for GCSE and A-level achievement. The 5A* - G pass rate was 100%, maintaining a record that the school is very proud of, namely that each year, nearly every student completes Year 11 with at least 5 GCSE successes to their name. 71% of pupils achieved C or above in both Maths and English, which is a new government measure introduced this year.
- Five students have gained the grades they needed to begin studies at Oxbridge colleges this Autumn and we offer them our sincerest congratulations (all students gained straight A grades).

ST MARYLEBONE SCHOOL: London Borough of Westminster

- The 1995 Ofsted inspection recognised the school as being 'good for the modestly able' but not so successful for the most academically bright. In the mid 90's around 39% of students were achieving 5 A*- C grades in GCSE examinations. The 2001 inspection report praised the school's Gifted and Talented programme, but considered that more could be done to raise attainment at the 'top end'. Over the last 9 years, the situation has changed dramatically. The school now consistently achieves an A*- C pass rate of around 90%. Last year the A*- C pass rate rose to 94%.
- In 1998 the school achieved specialist school status for the Performing Arts. In 2006 it has achieved an additional specialism for Maths and Computing. In 1998 the school achieved specialist school status for the Performing Arts. In 2006 it has achieved an additional specialism for Maths and Computing.
- Value-added data also indicates that St Marylebone School achieves exceptionally well, especially for able students.
- The list of university places achieved by the 2005 A level cohort, including places at Oxford and Cambridge, is impressive, as is entry to colleges of art, music and drama.

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