



IDENTIFYING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS

What do we mean by gifted and talented students?

When considering the issue of identifying gifted and talented students in your school, first ensure that colleagues are agreed on a definition.

INTRODUCTION

In the international field of gifted and talented education there is little consensus on what constitutes 'giftedness' or 'talent'. Instead there is a wide range of competing definitions and models. Some of these focus on an individual's intelligence, as measured by standardised tests, relative to the population as a whole. Some include consideration of an individual's disposition and character, for example persistence and task commitment, as well as ability in academic or creative pursuits. There is even disagreement about what is understood by 'intelligence', with a narrower view of intelligence as mathematical, logical and verbal ability being challenged in recent years by a view of 'multiple intelligences' that includes musical, kinaesthetic and interpersonal abilities (Renzulli 2003; Sternberg 2003; Heller et al 2000; Gardner 1999).

This multitude of definitions can leave educators none the wiser. To cut through the confusion, the Department for Education and Skills offers a simple working definition that is clear enough to be useful while allowing individual schools the latitude to tailor their own approaches to local circumstances. In a carefully worded statement, the department announced, 'DfES defines the group supported by the national programme for gifted and talented education 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)'.

The statement encourages schools to 'focus on learners who are gifted and talented relative to their peers in their own year group and school', emphasising that the definition encompasses potential as well as realised achievement, and that the range of abilities includes artistic and sporting talent (DfES 2006). The last point reiterates the government's interpretation of 'giftedness' as pertaining to academic ability and 'talent' to artistic and sporting ability.

The open-ended emphasis on 'children and young people . . . significantly ahead . . . relative to their peers in their own year group and school' (or with the potential to be so), represents a departure from earlier descriptions that quantified gifted and talented students as 'the top 5-10% of pupils per school' (GTWISE 2005). This definition was somewhat problematic because it implied an arbitrary cut-off point that could potentially disbar deserving students from recognition and appropriate provision.

Current DfES guidance advises, 'Schools are responsible for deciding the size of their gifted and talented populations, taking account of national and local guidance. Schools typically identify about 10% of their pupils' (DfES 2006). This more flexible advice allows schools the discretion to adopt an approach that reflects, and best serves, their student population. The government does stress, however, that all schools are accountable for identifying some part of every year group as gifted and talented students (Adonis, 2006b).

It is widely agreed that identifying gifted and talented students is not an exact science. This is especially true since each school's group is 'norm referenced', ie defined in comparison to the overall school population, rather than 'criteria referenced', ie defined according to a fixed, universal set of indicators. (The membership of the National Academy of Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) is criteria referenced; this is discussed below in the section on 'What are the issues to consider?')

Even given the flexible definition and relative nature of schools' target groups, however, there is a wealth of available guidance on identification that draws on the past decade's experience and developed best practice in this area. This is outlined in the section below on 'What might we do in school?'. Further advice is available from the websites listed at the end of the document.

WHY IS IDENTIFYING GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS IMPORTANT?

A focus on gifted and talented students is justified by considerations of entitlement and inclusion. Educators have long recognised that 'one size does not fit all' either for students with learning difficulties or for those who are capable of increased pace, depth and challenge (Winstanley 2004). The rights of more able students to equality of appropriate provision has been articulated recently under the DfES Personalisation agenda as one aspect of the wider rights of all students to provision suitable to their individual needs (DfES 2005: chapter 4). The Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Education, Andrew Adonis, has called 'identifying and nurturing children who are gifted and talented . . . the ultimate test of a genuinely comprehensive education system' (Adonis 2006b).

The 'English Model' of gifted and talented education emphasises integrating gifted and talented students with age peers in so far as possible and enabling teachers in ordinary classrooms to differentiate teaching to meet their needs (Eyre 2004). In order to ensure accuracy and fairness in targeting provision, schools need to

implement an informed and defensible system of identifying able, gifted and talented students.

Because identification is an inexact science, one strand of such a system involves offering students the opportunity to show what they can do by participating in challenging classroom activities. This establishes a synergistic relationship between identification and provision, with students' responses to appropriate learning opportunities being integrated as a key aspect of identification. In this way a greater number of potentially gifted students can learn what is expected and how to operate at higher levels. Emerging research evidence and considerable anecdotal evidence from teachers indicate that including differentiation for able students in normal classroom practice tends to reveal more such students and can contribute to raising standards overall (Adey and Shayer 1994; Wilson and Mant 2005).

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES TO CONSIDER?

It is clearly vital that identification measures are as accurate, fair and inclusive as possible. Using a range of indicators, including the informed professional judgement of teachers, allows schools to get as comprehensive a picture of students' abilities as possible, and to cross-check for consistency or anomalous patterns. It is also important that staff are aware of the range of factors that can mask ability, including:

- cultural and linguistic issues
- learning difficulties or other special educational needs co-existing with high ability
- disaffection
- a difficult or unsupportive home environment
- being among the younger children in the year group.

It is good practice for a school's Gifted and Talented leading teacher to provide staff development on recognising gifted and talented students, emphasising that this is the first step in providing effectively for their needs. In schools where identification practices are considered 'exemplary' under the rubric of the Institutional Quality Standards (IQS), the population of gifted and talented students is monitored to check that it is representative of the school population as a whole in terms of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic indicators, special educational needs, and English as an Additional Language.

A fair identification approach is also flexible, allowing students to move into the cohort at more than one point in the school year, for example if they join the school mid-year. Government guidance recommends that cohorts are flexible, with students moving into and out of the target group as appropriate. Managing this with sensitivity and fairness can seem daunting for schools with little experience of it; suggested good practice is outlined in the next section on 'What might we do in school?'

Identification systems need to be manageable and congruent with the school's needs and ethos. For example, some schools decide to avoid using the terms 'gifted and talented' and choose instead to refer to 'more able students'. Terminology is less important than a focus on equitable, accurate identification and appropriate classroom provision for all students who can benefit.

Since schools have discretion in deciding the size of their cohort, they may consider whether the recommendation of approximately 10% is appropriate for their circumstances. If a cohort is considerably larger than this, the school can lose focus on the particular needs of these learners. If a cohort is much smaller, there is a risk of overlooking students who should be included, particularly given the imperfect nature of even the best identification system. In any case, the size of cohorts in particular year groups should be allowed to vary to some degree if this is appropriate, for example if there is an unusually large number of highly able students in a particular year. In no circumstances should a fixed cut-off point be used to justify denying appropriate provision to a student capable of working at the level of the year group's designated gifted and talented students.

In 2006 the national register of gifted and talented pupils was sent to all secondary schools for the first time. It contained information about the students in each year group who had achieved most highly on English and mathematics Key Stage 2 SATs tests. In a letter announcing the national register, Andrew Adonis emphasised that the SATs information should be regarded as only one of a range of indicators schools should use to identify their gifted and talented students. He stressed that, although ranking on the basis of test scores 'may be a helpful guide, I must emphasise that it is just one piece of quantitative data that would be unreliable if used by itself, almost certainly failing to pick up late developers and underachievers.' He goes on to stress 'the significance of data *and* the value of qualitative evidence', giving special mention to 'identification through participation in suitably structured learning opportunities' (Adonis, 2006a). Schools are now expected to report back on their gifted and talented cohorts in their school census returns, and this information will be added to the national register.

It is good practice for schools to inform both students and their parents/carers about inclusion in the gifted and talented cohort. Parents have a right to be kept informed about their children's education, and will be in a better position to support and encourage them if they understand the nature of the provision their children are receiving. At the same time, schools are expected to operate flexible systems, with pupils moving into and out of the cohort. Schools sometimes feel that this level of openness can be difficult to handle in a way that preserves students' self-esteem. The section below on 'What might we do in school?' summarises the know-how of experienced gifted and talented co-ordinators and local authority advisers in this sensitive area. Of course the self-esteem of students not identified as gifted and talented must also be preserved and their activities celebrated. Schools that have established both a healthy ethos that applauds the entire range of young people's activities and abilities, and a caring system of pastoral support, are usually able to integrate and communicate gifted and talented provision in a way that neither underplays nor overplays it.

The National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) draws its membership from children and young people considered to be among the top 5% of their age group in England. The Academy publishes a fixed set of admission criteria annually that includes SATs and GCSE results, scores on cognitive ability tests, and

other indicators. They also encourage gifted and talented young people who, for a variety of reasons, may not 'test well', to submit portfolios of schoolwork. The Academy is committed to identifying and including young people from all backgrounds, and every secondary school is expected to put eligible students forward for membership. More information may be found on the NAGTY website, given at the end of this document.

WHAT MIGHT WE DO IN SCHOOL?

In devising an identification system, schools must consider the demands on time and resources that designing and implementing the system will entail. The 'entry', 'developing' and 'exemplary' levels of the Institutional Quality Standards recognise that schools may need to develop and refine their systems and provision over a period of several years. An elaborate system that is never used is far less effective than a simpler one that is. Above all an identification system should be seen as an interrelated aspect of the school's wider approach to providing for gifted and talented students. An identified cohort is not an end in itself, but a first step in establishing appropriate provision for this subset of the school population.

If your school is in the early stages of tackling the identification of gifted and talented students, you might consider the following approach:

- organise staff development to raise awareness and inform teaching colleagues of the purpose of identifying gifted and talented students
- consult and agree on a working definition and an approximate proportion of students for the cohort
- decide on quantitative and qualitative indicators
- set up an identification system
- trial the system, perhaps using it first on one year group, then roll it out across the school
- communicate the results to teaching and relevant support staff, pupils and parents/carers
- monitor the identification system
- refine it at suitable intervals.

Staff development

Gifted and talented provision is most effective when it is embedded in normal school practices. An effective way of doing this is to integrate it with the school's ongoing teaching and learning developments, such as the National Secondary Strategy, Assessment for Learning, target setting, personalisation, or specific curriculum development initiatives. This allows staff to understand and engage with it in context and avoids the risk of 'initiative fatigue'.

It is important to establish open communication and consultation with teaching staff from an early stage. This is professionally courteous, helps to ensure that staff do not see gifted and talented developments as being foisted on them, and allows the wealth of existing staff experience and good practice to be shared. Leading teachers and senior management teams may decide on a whole-staff development event to

introduce gifted and talented issues before an identification system is set up or at some point before it is finalised.

Alternatively, issues of definition and identification may be discussed within departments. In any case, it is advisable to set up a gifted and talented working party with representatives from each department, to keep gifted and talented issues on departmental agendas. Departmental representatives might initiate a discussion by circulating lists of generic and subject-specific indicators of high ability (for example those from the QCA). Colleagues can be invited to discuss, critique, add to and edit these to best match the school's student population. It is important to let colleagues know that such lists should be regarded as descriptions of high ability in some students, rather than cumulative checklists or scorecards, and that they may not be relevant in cases where students are not native English-speakers (Bonshek 2005). Such descriptors are helpful, however, both in prompting initial discussions about what high ability looks like in specific curriculum areas, and, when the identification system is in place, in helping to establish an informed and consistent approach to teacher nominations within the department. The NAGTY 'Nutshell' series of online e-learning resources for teachers may also be helpful for staff development. These provide useful overviews of a range of gifted and talented issues, including several on recognising and identifying such children and young people. They are available from the NAGTY website given in the 'Useful websites' section below.

The purpose of staff discussions at this stage is to share views about what constitutes 'giftedness' and 'talent' both more generally and within the school context, to discuss values and concerns, and to arrive at an agreed working definition and school-wide (or at least department-wide) approach.

Agree on a definition and a cohort size

The leading teacher for gifted and talented, assisted by departmental representatives, might suggest a range of definitions and understandings about gifted and talented students to colleagues, invite discussion and input, and finalise a working definition that departments and teaching staff can sign up to. It is important that there is a reasonable level of consensus on the school's definition, however open-ended or provisional, and that staff understand, for example, that the cohort is norm- rather than criteria-referenced, that high ability is not necessarily accompanied by commensurate performance, compliant behaviour, neatness, and so on.

The school's senior management team, advised by the leading teacher, will decide on a manageable cohort size for the school, bearing in mind issues of flexibility and inclusion, school circumstances and ethos, the national guidance, and any guidance from local authority or partnership advisers.

Decide on indicators

A fair and accurate identification system should draw on a range of indicators, both quantitative and qualitative. This allows for the cross-checking and 'triangulation' of data.

Quantitative indicators include:

- information from the national register for gifted and talented pupils
- SATs results
- results from internal school tests and exams
- scores from cognitive ability tests such as CATs, MidYis, Yellis, and Alis tests (such tests, particularly their non-verbal reasoning components, are less content-dependent and thus better indicators of potential as opposed to realised performance)
- scores from other standardised tests such as reading tests, Associated Board music grades, and so on.

Qualitative indicators include:

- transfer information from primary or middle schools
- teacher assessment and nomination
- information from English as an Additional Language and Ethnic Minority Achievement co-ordinators, and learning mentors
- classroom observation of students
- examples of students' work
- peer-nomination and self-nomination
- information from parents/carers
- information from outside sources such as sports coaches, music teachers or providers of enrichment activities.

A table showing the advantages and disadvantages of a number of these indicators may be found on the London Gifted & Talented website given at the end of this document.

Schools are often more comfortable relying on quantitative indicators, feeling that these are more 'objective', and consequently fair, than qualitative ones. However, some highly able young people do not necessarily 'test well', and exclusive reliance on test results would disadvantage them. Qualitative indicators are defensible if they result from informed discussion and shared understanding among professionals. Criteria for evaluating qualitative information, for example an observation schedule designed to analyse students' classroom performance, can still be rigorous, negotiated and consistently applied.

School identification systems tend to show increasing confidence in teachers' informed professional judgement and other qualitative indicators as a school gains more experience in identifying gifted and talented students (Haight 2005). Some schools seek the opinions of all adults in the school: teachers, specialist colleagues, and support staff. SENCOs, consultants on English as an Additional Language, educational psychologists, lab technicians, librarians, learning mentors, school secretaries, and lunchtime supervision staff may all have valuable insights into students that teachers may not have the time or opportunity to acquire.

Set up an identification system

Leading teachers or other members of staff responsible for establishing and managing the school's identification system will need access to its database of student information. Electronic information about students' performance on National Curriculum tests is provided to schools by the DfES via the Raiseonline website. Leading teachers can expect that both DfES information systems and proprietary school information management software will increasingly incorporate features to facilitate the identification of gifted and talented students.

An identification system for gifted and talented students will make use of much of this information, but schools still need to make decisions about:

- how the national register and Raiseonline data is used
- which other indicators will also be used
- how these are to be collected, analysed, communicated and monitored
- how the system will be integrated with other aspects of the school's information management system.

Leading teachers may need some help with technical elements, such as spreadsheets, from the school's data manager or IT support staff. Similarly, clerical help with keying in data might be sought from support staff once the system is set up.

To help schools analyse the results from CATs or MidYis tests, the DfES has commissioned a set of macros that filter and highlight information about students who might qualify for the gifted and talented cohort. These are freely available from the G&TWISE website address given in the 'Useful websites' section below. The macros are accompanied by a guidance document giving practical advice about how to use CATs/MidYis results to set targets with pupils and parents/carers.

A number of schools decide to identify a 'shadow' or 'near miss' cohort of pupils who show potential in one or more subjects but have not been included, at any particular iteration of the identification cycle, in the main gifted and talented cohort. The shadow cohort may be managed at a whole-school or departmental level, but in any case should certainly be publicised to departments. Often departments themselves decide to maintain a register of students considered able in their subject, regardless of whether they are included in the school-wide cohort or not. This type of talent spotting:

- acknowledges that students develop at different rates
- maintains flexibility in the system
- helps to combat perceived elitism
- values the abilities of all students with potential
- maintains a focus on appropriate, subject-specific provision for them.

It also reinforces a culture of achievement and tends to make movement into and out of the 'official' school-wide cohort easier for students and their parents/carers.

Inclusion of students at risk of being overlooked is a key aspect of identification systems at the 'developing' and 'exemplary' levels of the Institutional Quality Standards, and could be built in from the outset, if this is considered manageable.

Leading professionals need to ensure that the school's system incorporates measures to include such students, for example those with English as an Additional Language, or multiple exceptionalities. Experts in the latter, for example, sometimes recommend that schools show latitude in applying cut-off points in scores or attainment profiles for students with learning disabilities, provided there are other reasons for believing the student may have high ability (such as evidence of higher order thinking in classroom situations) (Winstanley 2005). At the very least, a mature identification system should provide opportunities for professionals such as educational psychologists and EAL consultants to have input into the system on behalf of individual students when appropriate.

Trial and roll out the system

It is advisable to 'road-test' a new identification system, for example on a single year group across the school or even in a limited number of departments, before implementing it for the entire school population. This allows the leading teacher to address any unexpected issues or problems that arise. Issues that will need to be considered include the optimal timing for operating the system and working with the results, in order, for example, to inform planning and decisions on pupil grouping strategies, timetabling, subject options, assessment and exam arrangements, etc.

After the pilot phase, leading teachers may decide to implement the system throughout the school all at once, or year group by year group, depending on the time and resources available. Once the system is established, it should be used on a school-wide basis annually, to allow timely reporting of the cohort in the school census.

Leading teachers will need to consider how to manage students' movements into and out of the cohort. A school might wish to have regular review points during the year or treat unusual situations on a case by case basis. The cohort should be reviewed at least once a year.

Communicate the results

The results of the identification process must be communicated to departments and individual teachers. Many schools find it useful to provide teachers and form tutors with highlighted mark sheets or registers to remind them of which students are identified as more able (either on the school-wide gifted and talented register, or the departmental 'shadow' register). Leading teachers should ensure that all teachers are informed and supported in planning and delivering lessons and enrichment activities that offer appropriate challenge to more able students. At the same time, it is important to recognise that many of these students will need the same levels of help in learning how to study and manage their time as any other students.

The gifted and talented cohort should also be communicated to the school's cross-departmental working party on gifted and talented issues. The working party might find it useful to compare notes on students that have received teacher nominations in some subjects but not in others. Of course sometimes the explanation for this is straightforward: the student is more able in some curriculum areas than others. But in some cases it might reveal unexpected latent potential. In such cases, teachers

can be encouraged to try out strategies for introducing higher challenge and more demanding expectations in order to increase the students' interest, motivation and performance in areas where they are underachieving.

It is considered good practice for schools to inform both students and parents/carers when a young person has been included in the gifted and talented cohort. Handling this sensitively can be a source of worry for schools. The following suggestions have been distilled from the experience of a number of gifted and talented co-ordinators and partnership advisers. You will also find sample extracts from communications with parents/carers in the Appendix of this document.

- Before sharing information about the cohort with students and parents/carers, schools need to be clear and confident of their own policy and approach toward the full range of gifted and talented issues. For this reason, it is a good idea to have a gifted and talented policy in place, with the senior management team, the entire teaching staff and the school governors informed about and familiar with it.
- Be open with parents/carers about the criteria for selecting students for the gifted and talented cohort. This can help parents and students understand that the criteria may be different from one school to another (for example between primary and secondary schools as well as among different secondary schools), and that the school's cohort is flexible over time. If there are individual instances of underachievement that mean a student is not selected or is removed from the cohort, parents/carers should be assured that the school will help the student to address these. In such cases, sharing the criteria can be a motivating factor in helping students work to their full potential. Having a shadow cohort, and explaining its purpose to students and parents/carers, can also be helpful in mitigating possible disappointment and reassuring them that the school recognises and values all types of ability.
- Many schools use parents' evening interviews to inform parents/carers that their children have been placed on the G&T register. This allows form tutors to answer any questions parents might have and explain how the school addresses the needs of more able students. It also allows schools to treat the information in a private and low-key manner, if this is felt to be appropriate to the school ethos. On the other hand, some schools hold a separate information evening with talks and workshops for the gifted and talented cohort and their parents/carers.
- If schools decide to send a letter to parents/carers, it is a good idea to state that the composition of the 'official' gifted and talented cohort is reviewed every year, and that the cohort is designed to be flexible and inclusive. Again, explanation of the existence and purpose of departmental cohorts is helpful here, and should make clear that subject-specific enrichment opportunities (such as school trips) are open to a wider group of students than the school-wide or departmental cohorts, depending on suitability and interest. Many schools follow up the letter with an information evening for students and parents/carers.

- Some schools do not inform parents or students if they have been moved from the school-wide to the shadow cohort, especially in cases where this is not due to underachievement but rather to other students doing marginally better. If students ask about this, form tutors or the lead teacher explains the situation in person, emphasising that the cohort is reviewed annually and the student may be placed back on the school-wide register next year, if circumstances warrant.
- Some schools celebrate student participation in gifted and talented activities – whether department- or school-wide – with measures such as certificates of achievement at the end of Year 11 and/or Year 13. The wording can vary according to the level of a student’s participation.

Monitor and refine the system

Once the identification system has been set up, trialled and implemented, with its results communicated to staff, students and parents/carers, teachers can focus on the main business of providing appropriate teaching to the targeted learners. Students in the cohort will be monitored as part of the school’s normal assessment processes. The leading professional is also likely to review the cohort as a whole to establish whether it is representative of the school’s population in terms of socio-economic profile, gender, ethnicity and special educational needs. Individual students will be monitored to follow the progress they are making through the curriculum, whether their pastoral needs are being met, and what specific guidance and information they may need (for example regarding early entrance for exams, A-level options, and so on). Students on shadow or departmental cohorts can also be monitored to determine whether their needs are being met and whether they might be included in the school-wide cohort in the future.

It is also important to notice indicative behaviour in students outside the main or shadow cohorts. Experienced gifted and talented co-ordinators recommend looking out for the ‘self-selectors’, students who show particular interest and enthusiasm for classroom or enrichment activities designed for the gifted and talented, and are keen to participate. Teachers should also be encouraged to notice the students they believe to be able but underachieving. Regular discussion of such students within departments can help teachers consider how best to engage them. There is further information about able underachievers in the launchpad on Underachievement. Both enrichment opportunities and classroom challenge should be available to students who are not on the official or shadow registers.

An identification system should be reviewed regularly to evaluate how well it works and whether any adjustments or changes of approach are necessary. Guided by the Institutional Quality Standard indicators for identification systems at ‘entry’, ‘developing’ and ‘exemplary’ levels, lead professionals will need to decide whether and how often a system needs to be revised. Monitoring the identification system can also highlight other areas where development may be needed, for example further staff development in differentiating for more able students.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- DfES Standards site: guidance on identification methods and processes:
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/giftedandtalented/>
- QCA guidance on identifying ability generally and in subject areas:
<http://www.nc.uk.net/gt/>
- G&TWISE: guidance and resources on gifted and talented education, including the Gifted & Talented Institutional Quality Standards
<http://www2.teachernet.gov.uk/gat/>
- London Gifted & Talented website: Information on identifying gifted and talented students: <http://www.londongt.org/teacherTools/index.php?page=identification>
Strengths and limitations of various types of indicators:
<http://www.londongt.org/teacherTools/index.php?page=gifted>
- Creative Generation: information on talent in the arts:
<http://www.creativegeneration.org.uk>
- Talent Ladder website: for high ability in sport:
<http://www.talentradder.org/index/html>
- Talent Matters website: for talent identification and development in physical education: <http://www.talentmatters.org/>
- Guidance and software for interpreting CATs and MIdYis test results:
<http://www2.teachernet.gov.uk/Resources/Resource.aspx?Resource=508>
- National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY):
<http://www.nagty.ac.uk>
Eligibility criteria:
http://www.nagty.ac.uk/student_academy/joining_nagty/documents/eligibility_criteria.pdf

NAGTY Nutshells: Online teacher information resources from the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth.

- *Young, gifted and what does that mean?*
 - *Who are they and how do I know?*
- NAGTY and The Open University (2005-06). Available online at:
http://www.nagty.ac.uk/professional_academy/nutshells/primary.aspx#
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SEE ALSO LAUNCHPADS ON

Underachievement
Cultural issues
Gender issues
Using data to promote achievement

APPENDIX: SAMPLE LETTERS TO PARENTS/CARERS

The following sample letters have been adapted from letters used in real schools and represent a range of approaches. They are included as possible models for contextualisation, as each school's approach will need to reflect its own policies and ethos.

Notifying parents/carers that a student is being included in the school's gifted and talented cohort

1

To the parent/guardian of

Now that the new academic year is well underway, the school has had a chance to review students' individual needs and aptitudes. As you may know, the government asks schools to identify its more able students in each year group. This helps to ensure that they receive appropriate learning opportunities that allow them to fulfil their potential and excel in their specialist areas along with other aspects of the curriculum. As the school's leading teacher for gifted and talented issues, I am pleased to inform you that your son/daughter meets key aspects of the school's criteria for inclusion in this group and has been placed on the school's gifted and talented register for this academic year.

I would like to invite you to an information evening for the parents/carers of students on the cohort, to explain what the school is doing for these students, outline what the school expects of them, and share some thoughts on how parents can help. This will take place in the school hall on _____ from __:00 to __.00. If you would like to attend this event, please complete the slip attached to this letter and return to me at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Leading Teacher for Gifted & Talented

Notifying parents/carers that a student is being included in the school's gifted and talented cohort

2

Dear _____,

I am pleased to inform you that the school considers _____ to be gifted and/or talented in the areas detailed below. The government are keen to ensure that able students are given the encouragement and opportunities that they deserve. Along with enrichment work in normal lessons the school will be providing the opportunity for Master Classes and other events to challenge _____ in those areas where we believe s/he has particular abilities.

I will be meeting with _____ shortly and would like to invite you along so that we can fully involve you in his/her future education. I will let him/her know the time and date of this meeting, and I look forward to meeting you.

In the meantime, please you could let me know of any interests or further talents that _____ may have outside school on the reply slip below.

We have identified _____ as being gifted and/or talented in the following areas:

English, Modern Foreign Languages, Maths, Science, PE, Humanities, ICT, Design and Technology, Music, Art, etc.

Yours sincerely,

Leading Teacher for Gifted and Talented

Notifying parents that a student is being moved from the school-wide cohort to a departmental or shadow cohort

Dear Parents/Guardian,

As you are aware, last year your child was placed on the school's gifted and talented register for meeting the school's criteria of:

- Level __ at Key Stage __ SATs in English, Maths and Science
- MidYis score of ___ or more
- Nomination from ___ departments as performing among the top 10% in their subject.

This ensured that he/she received a number of opportunities to fulfil his/her potential and allow him/her to excel in his/her specialist areas along with other aspects of the curriculum. Here at _____ School, we aim to offer facilities and provision to all students to improve their knowledge and skills across all subject areas and cross-curricular themes. Unfortunately your child has not been placed in the school's main Gifted & Talented cohort this year as other students previously not on the register are attaining at a slightly higher level and have therefore made it into the cohort.

Your son/daughter, however, remains among the group of students recognised by the school as performing particularly highly in the following subject/s:

-
-
-

He/she also remains in the same teaching groups and receives the same level of provision and enrichment opportunities as before.

I have also referred your son/daughter to the school's Learning Mentor and her team, where he/she will be mentored to ensure that he/she continues to progress, with a view to returning to the Gifted & Talented cohort in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Leading Teacher for Gifted and Talented