

# England's National Programme for Gifted and Talented Education

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## 1. The English Education System - Key Facts

- 150 local education authorities (LEAs) of variable size
- 18,000 primary schools (age 5-11)
- 3,500 secondary schools (age 11-16/18)
- 500 [check] post-16 institutions
- 600,000 pupils per year group (maintained sector)
- 93% of pupils in maintained sector
- 420,000 FTE qualified teachers in schools

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## Key facts continued

- All maintained primary and most maintained secondary schools are mixed ability
- Variety of 16-19 institutions from academic to specialist vocational
- National curriculum with 4 key stages: KS1 (5-7); KS2 (7-11); KS3 (11-14); KS4 (14-16)
- Foundation stage (3-5)
- Strong emphasis on 14-19 coherence

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## Government's education reform programme

- Labour Government since 1997; now midway through second term
- Shift from top-down (informed prescription) to bottom-up (informed professionalism)
- Strong emphasis on reducing bureaucracy, promoting collaboration, stimulating innovation
- 4 key areas of school reform: school leadership, structure of secondary education, teaching and learning, partnerships beyond the classroom

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## 2. G&T programme objectives

1. Achieve significant, measurable improvements in the attainment, aspirations, motivation and self esteem of gifted and talented pupils and students, especially those at risk of underachieving, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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## G&T programme objectives

2. Improve the quality of identification, provision and support in schools, colleges and LEAs/partnerships, targeting the weakest LEAs/partnerships, and develop robust quality standards to support this.

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## G&T programme objectives

3. Develop tools and identify and utilise levers to help ensure that every maintained school and college in every LEA is equipped to differentiate their teaching and learning to meet individual needs at the upper end of the ability range.

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## Mini policy statement (2001)

- Build on pupils' strengths and tackle any weaknesses, ensuring they receive a broad and balanced education
- Combine in-school learning with complementary opportunities outside school hours
- Provide more opportunities to progress in line with ability rather than age
- Blend increased pace, breadth and depth, in varying proportions according to pupils' ability and needs

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## Structure of G&T programme

- Introduced in spring 1999 and has expanded significantly since then
- Operates at 3 broad levels:
  - Intensive area-based programmes in disadvantaged areas
  - Resources that support teaching and learning nationally (England)
  - New focus on regional support, initially in London

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## How is the G&T population defined?

- Aged 3-19
- Within area-based programmes:
  - 5-10% of every year group in every (maintained) school (2-20% post-16)
  - Embracing all dimensions of ability, especially:
    - Gifted – ability in mainstream subjects
    - Talented – ability in creative arts or sports
- Outside area-based programmes, LEAs free to use own definitions

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## How big is the G&T population?

- We don't know exactly, since too much variation in definitions (and some schools don't define)
- Within local area-based programmes, we estimate up to 125,000 currently
- Nationally, around 800,000 would fall within the Government's definition

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## Policy levers

- Funding (but increased flexibility) and its withdrawal
- Accountability framework:
  - LEA and school plans (but rationalising)
  - G&T outcome measures and quality standards (under development)
  - Inspection
  - Peer assessment
- 'Mainstreaming'

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## Funding

- Allocations for area-based programmes around £60-70m a year
- A further £20m covers the costs of:
  - The Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth
  - GATE A of the London Challenge
  - The national summer schools programme
  - The G&T programme in PE and sports
  - Small projects

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## 3. The local dimension

- Area-based programmes form part of:
  - Excellence in Cities (11-16)
  - Excellence in Cities Primary (5-11)
  - Excellence Clusters (5-16)
  - Aim Higher (16-19)
- From September 2003, G&T provision will reach:
  - 1,000+ secondaries (30%)
  - 900 primaries (5%)
  - 150 post-16 institutions (30%) [check]

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## Reach and expansion

- All secondary schools in 58 LEAs (39%) run a Government-funded G&T programme
- From September 2003, 96 LEAs (64%) will have some schools running such a programme
- We expect further expansion of Excellence Clusters (over 95 clusters by 2006 compared with 40 now)
- We await confirmation of further expansion of EiC primary

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## What area-based programmes involve

- Audit of range and quality of current provision
- Plan built around SMART objectives (now shifting to outcome measures)
- An identified, relative, flexible population in each school, regardless of its ability profile
- A 'distinct' teaching and learning programme
- A complementary study support programme, typically provided through a cluster of schools
- A whole school policy and targets
- Trained school, cluster and strand co-ordinators

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## Summary of inspection outcomes

- Providing a broader range of opportunities and helping raise aspirations, confidence, self-esteem
- Effect on achievement variable
- Secondary schools increasing challenge and enrichment
- Not yet same level of acceptance in primaries

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### Inspection outcomes continued

- Most schools focus less on talented pupils
- Top priority is how to improve provision (differentiation) in ordinary lessons
- Schools also need to improve identification
- There is a need for more subject-based support

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### Lessons learned

- There is no single, perfect identification instrument, so a portfolio approach is preferable
- If a school's G&T population is markedly unrepresentative, that's a strong indicator that underachievers are not being recognised
- G&T co-ordinators need senior management support, time and status; subject leaders have responsibilities too

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### More lessons learned

- Study support offers 'quick wins' - it is much harder to effect real change in the classroom
- 'Labelling' can present problems but is no excuse for poor communication with parents and pupils
- Monitoring and evaluation is regularly neglected
- School-based partnerships can be strong but some fail to challenge poor performance by their members
- the 'Heineken Effect' is elusive

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### Future development

- Potentially realigned as 5-11, 11-14 and 14-19, to fit with national core strategies
- Shift away from strands towards themes ('teaching and learning' or 'excellence and progression')
- A robust quality standard alongside outcome measures
- Peer support following peer assessment, potentially organised regionally and led by kitemarked LEAs

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## 4. The national dimension

Has three components:

- The Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth
- Other resources for educators, pupil programmes and pilot activities
- Mainstreaming within other parts of Government education policy

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## The Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth

- Warwick University selected through tender to host
- Core partners are CTY, at Johns Hopkins, USA and RECAP, at Oxford Brookes, England
- Director is Professor Deborah Eyre
- Initial focus on national 5% population aged 11-16 (so subset of overall population)
- Pilot year began in July 2002 with a small-scale trial of 3-week residential summer schools
- It culminates this summer with a full scale pilot of residential summer schools

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### Academy's summer schools

- 5 University venues
- 31 courses (4-10 per venue)
- 550 participants (60-170 per venue)
- Good balance by gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background (using EIC areas as proxy)
- Not over-dominated by independent sector
- Unit cost of around £1,700 of which £1,100 is Government subsidy
- Remaining £600 shared between schools (£270) and family (£330 with means-tested sponsorship fund)

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### Not just summer schools!

In the intervening academic year, the Academy has also been developing

- Its own infrastructure and website
- A talent search methodology
- A range of outreach activities
- Online communities for pupils, parents and educators
- E-learning and e-mentoring trials

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### Academy's Talent Search

- Loc8or
- Portfolio approach comprising: application letter, formal test evidence, evidence from other sources
- Eligible test evidence includes: national curriculum assessment results, world class tests, SAT1 reasoning, cognitive ability tests, public examinations
- Evidence from other sources includes: original coursework, supporting letter from school or another educational source
- 1,600 members, increasing at 50-80 per week

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### Future development of Academy

- Expansion to 16-19 in 2003/04 and 5-11 in 2004/05
- Working with wider G&T population through associate school programme
- Further support for parents and educators
- Diversification of students programme, with summer schools as part of a continuum
- ILP as basis of partnership with schools (blending inclusion and withdrawal)

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### Areas of focus

- Help develop approaches to assessment and identification
- Develop support services for individual students
- Develop and disseminate understanding of programme design
- Establish an operational framework for programme delivery by the Academy and other providers
- Develop and support CPD at all levels
- Conduct longitudinal studies of Academy members
- Mediate research findings

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### Other national resources

- Physical education and sports project
- National summer schools programme
- World class arena
- National curriculum guidance
- Xcalibre directory of resources
- Conference programme
- Small-scale pilot projects

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## PE and sports project

- Contributes to wider project to achieve 2 hours per week of quality PE and sports for all pupils
- Talent support programme for partnerships built around specialist sports colleges
- 'team you' approach to lifestyle management and planning

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## PE and sports project continued

- Multi-skill clubs to help year 6 and 7 pupils develop generic skills
- National performance camps for elite young athletes
- Support programme for talented young disabled athletes in 8 key sports
- Research support and a pupil profiling and tracking system

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## National summer schools programme

- 500 summer schools for 10-14 year-olds
- Every LEA runs at least one summer school
- Each involves a partnership between the education sector and one or more community partners
- Subject-specific, thematic or project-based

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## World class arena

- Tests and supporting assessment material for pupils aged up to 9 and up to 13 in maths and problem-solving
- Measuring performance against most able pupils in countries leading international comparisons studies
- Part-computerised and part paper-based, but online variant for maths increasingly popular
- Range of teaching, learning and assessment materials under development

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## National Curriculum Guidance/Xcalibre

- Online guidance and parallel online resource directory
- Covers main school curriculum subjects, primary and secondary – generic and subject sections
- About to retender Xcalibre with a view to developing into a portal

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## Conferences

- Termly standing conferences for representatives of all key stakeholders started March 2002
- Broad-based forum for policy development, consultation and networking
- Every third conference is a larger annual conference – second conference November 2003
- Building a virtual conference to link events and provide greater continuity

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## Pilot projects

- PIPAR – 16 small-scale primary action research projects led from RECAP, Oxford Brookes University
- KS1 – 6 small scale action research projects led from Brunel Able Children's Centre
- ALCs – long-term study support programmes for older primary children across a range of subjects
- Arts – framework and guidance to help co-ordinators meet the needs of talented young artists

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## 5. Introducing a regional dimension – London

- Part of the London Challenge
- London issues include EAL, asylum seekers, pupil mobility
- 33 London LEAs – 21 of 33 engaged in EiC area-based programmes; others engaged in G&T to varying degrees
- Patchy provision across boroughs – excellence and poor provision in close proximity
- Limited support and collaboration across boundaries

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## GATE A

- Designed as a bottom-up collaborative venture
- Tendered for London LEAs and their partners to run
- Preferred bidder consortium includes 3 London LEAs involved in EiC and 2 London universities
- October launch
- London Talent 'curtain raiser' – 4 week drama summer schools, showing how London's arts and cultural community can help

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## GATE A structure 1

- A small pan-London centre will manage the programme
  - running city-wide projects
  - ensuring linkage to other strands of London Challenge
  - Holding clusters and networks accountable against targets

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## GATE A structure 2

- Sub-regional LEA clusters will develop collaborative programmes:
  - tackling local priorities
  - achieving economies of scale
- Thematic networks will:
  - link centres of expertise across sectors – eg primary/secondary transition, performing arts
  - Develop a quality standard, audit tools, guidance and small scale research to improve practice

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## GATE A structure 3

- A cutting-edge managed learning environment with broadband capability will:
  - provide e-learning with mentor support
  - provide e-CPD
  - support the operation of clusters and thematic networks
  - support GATE A's management information needs

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