

[Finding and exploring young children's fascinations: strengthening the quality of gifted and talented provision in the early years](#)

DfE 2010: Key messages related to cultural capital

The DCSF defines gifted and talented children as those:

'...with one or more abilities developed to a level significantly ahead of their year group (or with the potential to develop those abilities)' **Identifying gifted and talented learners – getting started (DCSF, 2008)**

A clear focus on personalisation lies at the heart of the national programme to improve gifted and talented (G&T) education across all phases. p.2

The key underlying principles are:

- developing effective pedagogy
- counteracting disadvantage
- preventing and addressing underachievement.

Close relationships with parents

The earliest years are a critically important time and practitioners have a responsibility to create environments in which young children's learning and development can flourish and their gifts and talents can be recognised, nurtured and extended. p.3

A talent unfulfilled is not just an opportunity cost. It is an opportunity lost.' p.4

Alan Milburn MP, chair of the Government's panel on social mobility (July, 2009)

Every practitioner therefore has a responsibility to be alert to the unique strengths, interests and capacities of every child in their setting, particularly those from disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, in order to:

- address barriers to development
- provide access to an environment that will engage

Dweck (2006) suggests that as soon as we are able to make judgements about ourselves as learners, we develop *'mindsets'* that either enhance or inhibit our capacity for learning. A *'growth mindset'* reflects the belief that we are active agents in the learning process with the ability to affect change, but learning may be limited by a *'fixed mindset'* where capacity for learning is perceived as static and unalterable, regardless of the effort we put in.

Parents as partners: When people are deeply and joyfully engaged in an experience or activity, we often say that they are 'in their element', but what does that really mean? Ken Robinson argues that when people are in their element 'they connect with something fundamental to their sense of identity, purpose and well being'. p.11

He stresses that the element is different for everyone but that it has two main features:

- aptitude – having a natural facility for something, either general or highly specific
- passion – taking a deep delight and pleasure in it.

He also identifies two key conditions:

- attitude – motivation and self-belief, perseverance, optimism, ambition
- opportunity – we may never discover our true element without the opportunities we have,

p.38

Challenges: Clear definition, Avoiding stereotypical perceptions, Working in genuine and equal partnership with parents and carers

Effective key person approach

'The setting up of enriched environments is critical, though it is all too easy to make an environment over-stimulating. Most gifted and talented children prefer to investigate in depth rather than flit from one superficial task to another. The level of openness in the resource and environment should be such that the child is able to explore boundaries, allowing uniqueness to emerge. It is in this zone that many gifts and talents emerge.'

(DCSF, Pascal, 2006)

p.35 Case study special interests-

Perception of learning- SEAD

'Teaching and learning are suitably challenging and varied, incorporating the breadth, depth and pace required to progress high achievement. Learners routinely work independently and self-reliantly'

Institutional Quality Standards in Gifted and Talented Education 2:

Suggestions from the document How to find out about children's cultural experiences to capitalise on them and build on talents-

Bring and brag/ Story making

https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Finding_Exploring.pdf