

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **POLICY AND GUIDANCE TO PROMOTE GOOD PRACTICE IN GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION**

Date: 27 August 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Mrs Quick

Contact Officer(s): Karen Butler (01628 796908)

Wards Affected: All

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Provision for gifted and talented pupils, as part of inclusive education, is underpinned by Every Child Matters, and is essential to tackling underperformance in schools. The Royal Borough's policy has been revised from the 2004 version to take account of a renewed focus on 'personalisation', increased attention on gifted and talented and underperformance by the Department for Children, Families and Skills / National Strategies and the Borough's aspiration for all schools to be 'outstanding'.
- 1.2 This report summarises for Members the key elements of the revised gifted and talented policy, and guidance for schools to develop further their effective provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- 1.3 The policy is in draft format and will be subject to consultation with schools in the autumn term (2009).

2. **RECOMMENDATION: That the draft gifted and talented policy be ratified so that schools can be consulted in the autumn term and a final version be drawn up for publication by November 2009.**

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?

All schools will be clear about the Royal Borough's expectations with respect to gifted and talented provision. All children will benefit from an increased awareness of and focus on personalisation. In particular, the policy and guidance will enable schools to identify and support individual children identified as gifted and/or talented. A better understanding of the identification process, coupled with high expectations and more effective provision will contribute to narrowing the attainment gap for all pupils.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

3.1 The legislative background to the revision of this policy is as follows:

Every Child Matters (2003)

Higher Standards for All, Better Schools for All (2005)

2020 Vision (2007)

The Secondary Curriculum Review (2007)

Each of these documents emphasises the need for equity and excellence, which is reflected in the local commitment to ensure that all pupils have an education suited to their needs and abilities. In addition, a focus on gifted and talented pupils can raise aspirations of all learners.

3.2 The policy supports the priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan (2008-2011), in particular, *Enjoy and Achieve (Narrowing the attainment gap so that vulnerable and potentially underachieving children achieve the highest possible standards)*

3.3 The policy recommends the use of the Institutional Quality Standards which will assist in moving schools from 'good' to 'outstanding'.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	To accept the draft policy	Schools will have a clear framework and guidance to support Gifted and Talented provision.	£9,000 budget allocated to Gifted and Talented, funded by Area Based Grant
2.	To reject the draft policy	The Council has a duty to take account of the 5 priorities of the Every Child Matters. The policy supports the <i>Enjoy and achieve</i> priority. To reject the policy would not be in line with this duty.	

4.2 Risk assessment

4.2.1 The risk of not effectively implementing a Borough policy for gifted and talented provision would be potentially to depress outcomes for children and young people locally. A lack of clarity in the Royal Borough's position on gifted and talented pupils could lead to inequitable provision, possibly raising parental concerns about inconsistency of approach. As a high-achieving authority, we seek to support our

headteachers in raising their aspirations in order to improve standards further. This could be jeopardised by a failure to implement the policy effectively.

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

5.1 Schools to be consulted on the draft policy and guidance in the autumn term.

6. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

6.1 The Panel unanimously endorsed the report, subject to the following comments:

The Panel requested a further report for consideration by the Scrutiny Panel that would highlight best practice, the sharing of expertise, the potential engagement of outside resources (including neighbouring authorities), and any further practical steps the Borough could take to encourage and develop services for gifted and talented pupils.

The Panel welcomed the Government White Paper, which would strengthen provision for gifted and talented pupils. The importance of providing both emotional and academic support was underlined. It was noted that very young pupils (aged five upwards) could be gifted and talented. The Panel acknowledged the importance of the work of Advanced Skills Teachers, specialist status schools, and the masterclasses run by both the Local Authority and individual schools. It was suggested that where possible the report and the policy should consider cost implications.

7. IMPLICATIONS

The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓

Background Papers: None