

How can Parents best support their able, gifted and talented child?

Parental support is a significant factor in a child's success at school. Below is a list of advice and tips for parents of AGAT children.

- Gifted and talented learners are sometimes isolated and they do a lot of thinking. A listener at home is invaluable.
- Able children may not share the same interests as friends but maintaining friendships is important. Accommodating this is clearly helpful.
- Research has shown that most teenagers need 8 – 10 hours of sleep a night. Sleep aids concentration and focus in lessons.
- A healthy diet plays an important part in educational success. Children who eat a healthy breakfast are more alert, energetic and perform better in class. Providing water for the day is vital, although there are fountains in school. It is recommended that pupils drink about two litres a day. Inadequate intake of water can lead to dehydration, being tired and an inability to function and concentrate.
- For homework tasks, provision of a quiet place where your son/daughter can work undisturbed can help considerably.
- Gifted and talented learners often like to find things out for themselves. Providing access to a computer with the internet assists independent learning skills. If a PC is not available at home there are plenty of opportunities to get to a PC at school and also at the local library.
- Extending your child's knowledge of the world can be helpful. Perhaps discuss issues raised by films and current affairs. Getting involved in a broad range of experiences can also be useful such as the visit to a museum, art gallery, listening to different types of music and going to concerts.
- Sometimes the most effective support a parent can offer may be to limit the number of engagements their child attends. This allows them to develop their own interests and hobbies.

There are a variety of resources and information for parents on the internet. The following sites may prove of interest.

- www.mumsnet.com/Talk/gifted
- www.nagcbrtain.org.uk
- www.parentcentre.gov.uk
- www.parentpartnership.org.uk
- www.excellenceeast.org.uk
- www.thegrid.org.uk/learning/gifted/parents
- www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/gifted
- www.giftedmonthly.homestead.com
- www.nace.co.uk
- www.channel4.com/programmes/child-genius
- www.mensa-org.uk
- www.bgfl.org

A few books may also be of use.

- "Supporting the Child of Exceptional Ability." Susan Leyden. Published by David Fulton. (3rd edition) 2002.
- "Parents' and carers' Guide for Able and Talented Children." Barry Teare. Published by Network Educational Press Ltd.
- "Gifted Children grow up." Joan Freeman. Published by NACE / Fulton publication 2001.