

Effective Provision for Able and Talented Children

Barry Teare - Network Educational Press (1997)

This book is the seventh title in The School Effectiveness Series which focuses on practical and useful ideas for schools. It covers the whole gamut of needs of able and talented children from identification to resources. Its immediacy is striking. There is a welcome dearth of verbosity and jargon. There is, instead, a wealth of pertinent and interesting checklists and references, interspersed with key messages.

The book does not pretend to have a radical, new approach, but it does build wisely on accepted knowledge and provides schools and individual teachers with shrewd and comprehensive guidance. It lingers thoughtfully on identification and its attendant dangers and it supposes that anything up to 30-40% of pupils are able or talented.

The strengths of the book lie in its insistence for active school policies and the importance of a co-ordinator. It stresses the key factors of teacher qualities and curriculum principles, including the creation of individual education plans for able children. It has a sensible, achievable approach to enrichment, monitoring and evaluating and a thorough appraisal of resources available. I liked its terse statement that 'materials abound', because they do. The book is very detailed with taut lists on theory and practice and some sample material. It is a very good reference tool for any school who recognises the need for urgent action to help able children.