

Pilot School-based Programme for Academically Gifted Children

Evaluation Report Executive Summary

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the Evaluation of Pilot School-based Programme
for Academically Gifted Children**

The Membership of the Working Group since April 1996 has been as follows :

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**Working Group on the Evaluation of Pilot School-based Programme
for Academically Gifted Children**

Terms of Reference

To oversee the evaluation of the Pilot School-based Programme for Academically Gifted Children and to make recommendations to the Director of Education on the basis of the evaluation.

Chapter 1 : Introduction

The Education Commission Report No. 4 was published in November 1990. Various recommendations were made on 'measures to provide for students who are academically gifted'. A three-year pilot school-based programme for academically gifted children was one of the recommendations suggested. In November 1994, the Education Department initiated the pilot project in 19 primary schools volunteered to take part in the pilot. The report also suggested to conduct an overall evaluation upon completion of the project. In 1996, a working group on evaluation of the project was set up by the Department to monitor the evaluation work on the project and to make recommendations to the Department in the light of the findings of the evaluation.

Chapter 2 : Development of Gifted Education in Hong Kong and its Significance

There were series of changes and interpretations in the development of the definition on giftedness. From the historical point of view, the concept of 'giftedness' has been evolving from unidimensional to multidimensional; from convergence to divergence; and the focus of attention has shifted from cognitive to affective aspects, and from latent potentials to the development of performance. Changes in the concept of 'giftedness' have brought forth changes in the emphasis of identification process and the placement of gifted students for gifted education services. As a result, to include as many gifted students as possible has become the major objective of such education. Gifted education essentially aims at developing the potentials of gifted students and meeting their educational needs. Teachers have to take into account the existing conditions of schools as well as the needs of students, and then bring them in line with each other so as to realise the objective of gifted education.

Development of Gifted Education in Hong Kong

Though universal education has developed a unified fundamental curriculum, it failed to provide appropriate learning opportunities for students with extremely high or extremely low learning ability. In the 1980's, the emphasis of education in Hong Kong began to shift from the increase on 'quantity' to 'quality'. Much effort had been made to enhance the quality of education by developing professional support systems for the development of students with different potentials or special educational needs. These efforts laid the foundations of services for gifted children in the territory. The development of gifted education in the 1980's had aroused the attention of teachers and schools to address to the issue of individual differences in learning.

The definition of 'giftedness' in Hong Kong's context

The definition of 'giftedness' provided in Education Commission Report No. 4 confirmed that its definition should be multidimensional. The report suggested that gifted children refer to those children with exceptional achievement or potentials in one or more of the following :

- (i) a high level of measured intelligence;
- (ii) specific academic aptitude in a subject area;
- (iii) creative thinking - high ability to invent novel, elaborate and numerous ideas;
- (iv) superior talent in visual and performing arts such as painting, drama, dance, music etc.;
- (v) natural leadership of peers - high ability to move others to achieve common goals; and
- (vi) psychomotor ability - outstanding performance or ingenuity in athletics, mechanical skills or other areas requiring gross or fine motor co-ordination.

According to the report, all the above six characteristics are important and may be overlapping at times. However, Hong Kong should first concentrate on cultivating academically gifted students who possess one or more of the first three listed characteristics. The report also suggests that school-based curriculum should be developed in mainstream schools to cater for the needs of gifted students instead of centralising such students to learn in special schools. To implement the policy of educating gifted students in mainstream schools, the Education Department initiated a number of studies and a series of measures as follows : (1) in response to the recommendations of Education Commission Report No. 4, the Department carried out two research studies on gifted education in 1992, one on designing tools to identify gifted children and the other on the distribution of gifted children in primary schools and the identification of their educational needs; (2) the Department also started a three-year pilot school-based programme for academically gifted children in 1994 and an evaluation had been scheduled in the third year after its implementation; and (3) the Education Commission also recommended that a professional team be set up, with the support of a resource centre, to support and devise educational services for gifted students, as well as to develop school-based programmes and teaching materials. Construction work on Phase I Development of the Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre was completed at the end of 1995. Through this centre, support services and resources were provided for gifted children, their parents and teachers.

Chapter 3 : Methods and Means of Evaluation

Evaluation methods

The method of analysis adopted for this evaluation consists of both macro and micro approaches. The macro-approach provides a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of curricula across the 19 pilot schools while the micro-approach thoroughly examines the characteristics of individual schools by means of case studies to shed light on the different operational experiences in the implementation of school-based curriculum.

The main purpose for carrying out this evaluation is to seek valuable information needed for policy considerations. The evaluation process focuses on collecting, presenting and providing relevant information for the purpose of improving and streamlining future service provision. The evaluation covers four aspects: background, input, process and output, as well as their relationship with each other. Three evaluation methods have been adopted. The first one is an overall examination of the activities, i.e. through the collection of information on the curricula in the pilot scheme. The second method is by questionnaire survey, i.e. collecting views from students, parents, school heads, teachers-in-charge, responsible teachers and other teachers on the pilot scheme in a systematic manner. The third method is to adopt in-depth case study approach to identify the characteristics of inspiring schools and the views of teachers, as well as to gain insight into the characteristics of some schools from a school-based perspective.

Chapter 4 : Background

Students taking part in the pilot scheme are of two major categories : (1) intellectually gifted; and (2) academically gifted. Before a child can be identified as intellectually gifted, nomination by teachers or parents through the use of a behavioural checklist is a prerequisite. The child would then be assessed by a standardised intelligence test. Those with an IQ of 130 or above are considered as intellectually gifted. As for academically gifted children, based on school's internal examination results, top four percent of the students of the school are eligible for nomination by the school to take part in a screening test. Students with either two of the three subjects of Chinese, English and Mathematics reaching the top two percent within the Hong Kong Attainment Test (HKAT), are regarded as academically gifted. To teachers-in-charge of the scheme, the two tools which they are more familiar with are students' daily performance and their achievements in internal examinations. Both school heads and teachers-in-charge unanimously agree that participation in the pilot scheme would help to enhance teachers' understanding of gifted education. According to the feedback given by school heads, their reason for joining the scheme is based on education ideals and practical teaching needs. In this respect, teachers-in-charge fully support participation in the scheme because it will enhance teachers' understanding of gifted education and meet the practical need to look after students already identified as gifted. Moreover, participating schools will obtain more

teaching resources. According to gathered data, the adequacy of resources is not a crucial factor for encouraging schools' active participation. To school heads and teachers-in-charge, the attitude of teachers toward gifted education and their mastery of related concepts are even more important.

Chapter 5 : Input

Background analysis of teachers-in-charge of the project shows that they are mature, experienced and trusted by schools, which is a key to the success of these programmes. There was no apparent wastage of teachers because nearly half of the teachers-in-charge took part throughout the 3 years duration of the pilot project for three successive years. During the pilot project, the Education Department organised a variety of training sessions for teachers, signifying the diversifying nature of gifted education in Hong Kong as well as the diversified attempts which the programmes tried to make. Active participation by teachers of these schools with training sessions being held at schools indicated the effect of school-based training in boosting the enthusiasm for gifted education among all teachers in a school. As for comments on these training sessions, nearly all or more than half of the headmasters found the sessions helpful in self-improvement while all or most of the teachers-in-charge agreed with the statement. On the whole, the Education Department played an important and positive role in supporting the programme in the input process of the whole programme.

Chapter 6 : The Process

Among the 161 activities carried out in the course of the project, nearly two-thirds used the pull-out approach while one-third adopted the within class approach. Although more schools used the pull-out approach, about half of the schools had tried the within class approach in their gifted programmes. According to feedback from schools, the pull-out approach was chosen because it was easy to apply and was compatible with teachers' normal work arrangements and interest. Other schools did not use this approach as it was not compatible with their current mode of operation and there was no room for it within the mainstream curriculum. There were three options in adopting the within class approach: (1) "Streaming all the gifted students in the same grade and grouping them in one class". The reason for using this approach was that elements of gifted education could be incorporated into the mainstream curriculum and there would be positive influences on other students. (2) Another option, which adopted neither the pull-out nor the streaming approach, was "regrouping of gifted students according to their abilities in a class". Schools adopted this within class ability grouping option because they believed that the mainstream curriculum could integrate elements of gifted education and that their teachers were competent organisers. (3) The third option simply allowed gifted students in the same grade to learn in the same class, adopting none of the above approaches. Schools chose this approach because it was easy to apply and compatible with their current mode of operation. According to the overall feedback

from schools, the choice of teaching approach not only depended on whether it was easily applicable, but also on its compatibility with the school's current mode of operation, as well as the task at hand and competency of teachers. Whether the approach could be incorporated into the mainstream curriculum and how school resources should be allocated were considerations which would be taken into account by schools as well.

As regards the nature of teaching activities for the gifted, they could be divided into 2 main categories, i.e. (1) activities on thinking, including training on creative thinking and thinking skills, and (2) affective education and training on interpersonal skills. Judging from the activity outlines, it could be concluded that schools had tried out various types of activity during the 3-year pilot project, particularly those on creative thinking and self-learning activities. Responses to the questionnaires revealed that schools had adopted different media and approaches in carrying out the activities of the pilot programmes. As these activities were conducted through integrating different teaching approaches and skills, they served as good evidence to support the proposition that by initiating gifted education programmes, schools would be motivated to attempt an integrated approach of teaching. Under the integrated approach, students would be able to feel the dynamic nature of learning; this, in turn, would enhance students' sense of involvement and willingness to make different and further attempts in learning, thus improving the quality of teaching and learning as a whole. It was also noticed that change in students' attitudes had led to more active participation of teachers, who were willing to experiment on different teaching approaches in deviating from the traditional one-way lecturing. Creative teaching made students more dynamic and active in participation, and it was then easier for teachers to identify students' talents. Responses to questionnaires for parents, teachers and school heads were all in favour of the implementation of gifted curriculum. This was because such activities were able to enhance the interests of school administrators, teachers, parents and students in teaching and learning, as well as to motivate them to try novel modes of teaching, consequently providing teachers with new insights to teaching approaches for reference. As regards comments on teaching modes and their implementation, most of the students and parents involved in the pilot project showed appreciation of the arrangement of activities and the efforts made by the teachers. Most parents considered that the activities of these pilot programmes had provided their children with novel learning experiences which could not be gained through ordinary classroom activities. During the pilot project, only a small number of students required adjustment in their interpersonal relations. These figures serve to attest the validity of the project's guiding principle of integrating gifted students into mainstream schools rather than labelling them. Under this principle, gifted children would not be troubled by the problems arising from being segregated. On the whole, the pilot programme provided the participants, both teachers and students, with more room to experiment and develop a diversified range of activities. Despite their less prominent roles in the programme, more than half of the other teachers who were not directly involved in the programme indicated their support of the pilot project carried out in their schools. To most of the school heads, teachers-in-charge and responsible teachers, the common problem they faced was the decision to allocate human resources in schools. Undoubtedly, gifted education could not be fully

implemented if there was a lack of appropriate resources, but schools could also manage their resources sensibly and effectively. By and large, given that creative teaching could provide new insights into the existing teaching methods in Hong Kong, and widen the scope for students to explore and exercise their capabilities and potential, it will serve as a good foundation for, as well as a key factor to the promotion of gifted education. As a result, it has far-reaching effects on enhancing quality education in schools.

Chapter 7 : Out-put

As manifested by the findings of the evaluation. The programmes and activities of the Pilot Project not only engendered positive influence on participating students but also on other students. As for the impact on learning, data collected from questionnaires showed that since the objective of the project was not aimed at improving the academic achievement of students, participating students, as well as their parents, agreed that the academic results and writing skill of the students had not improved significantly after taking part in the projects activities. Nevertheless, the majority of the primary students and teachers-in-charge were satisfied that these activities did broaden the students' scope of learning. They also agreed that these activities could motivate students to make more active attempts to learn on their own. It is thus evident that the school-based programme has been very effective in this respect. In the long run, if gifted education could be popularised by adopting the within class approach of introducing gifted education elements in teaching on a wider scale, the fine spirit of gifted education can be integrated into the curriculum to benefit other students as well. As regards the development of creativity and thinking, quite a large population of students and their parents opined that the students had become more creative after participating in the project's activities. A rather high percentage of teachers-in-charge also expressed agreement with this. Majority of students and teachers-in-charge were satisfied with the effectiveness of these activities in enhancing the students' creative thinking skill. They also agreed that after participating in the activities, the students became more capable in solving problems. As for the impact on the students' emotion and their interpersonal relations, most students, their parents and teachers-in-charge were satisfied that through these activities, the students had learnt how to get along with people and deal with problems properly.

Regarding the effect of the schools' influence on students, the findings of the questionnaires indicate that some schools manage to attain an average value higher than the mean value derived from all schools participating in the project on quite a number of "positive items". The findings reflect that these schools can exert greater positive influence on students in certain aspects. Nevertheless, these schools also attain an average value higher than the mean value of all schools in a number of the "negative items" at the same time. This indicates that the same group of schools is exerting greater negative influences on students as well. As a result, it is necessary for these schools to be aware of problems which they may bring on the students, e.g. additional pressure and perplexities concerning interpersonal relations.

As for the effect on the teachers-in-charge of gifted programmes, all school heads and teachers-in-charge agreed that participation in the Pilot Project could enhance these awareness of teachers in gifted education. All school heads and teachers-in-charge opined that the activities could promote the professional knowledge and dedication of teachers. Most teachers-in-charge agreed that the activities could encourage teachers to take part in curriculum development work. Besides, many school heads and all teachers-in-charge agreed that the activities could improve the teaching skills of teachers. From the point of view of school heads and teachers-in-charge, the Pilot Project could enhance the knowledge and professional skills of teachers in respect of gifted education. With regard to the attitude of teachers, it was commendable that the teachers would encourage their students to think independently and accept the differences in opinion from students without regarding these divergent opinions as a challenge to their authority and dignity. This kind of open-minded teaching, different from the pure transmission of knowledge, is beneficial to the development of both gifted and normal students. Teachers also agreed that the activities helped them to have a better understanding of gifted students and to improve their skills in dealing with the needs of gifted students. On the whole, most teachers-in-charge opined that the time spent on the Pilot Project had been well-spent. They were also satisfied that they had gained a better understanding of gifted students and improved their teaching skills after taking part in the Project.

As to the impact on the schools as a whole, most of the school heads and teachers-in-charge fully agreed that these gifted activities had introduced to their schools new concepts on curriculum development and new ideas on school policy. Teachers fully agreed that the activities had created a proper and good learning atmosphere for their schools. School heads and responsible teachers said that the activities helped to bring in more service resources. Responsible teachers generally recognised the impacts bring about by the gifted programmes on their schools. This reaffirmed that it was correct to adopt the school-based approach in the development of gifted education for Hong Kong. This approach had produced positive effects on students and brought benefits to the whole school. As regards the future orientation of gifted education, the idea was well-received by most school heads, teachers-in-charge, responsible teachers and other teachers. These features should include : to provide more training for teachers involved in gifted education, to provide more training for parents with children involved in gifted education; to formulate long-term goals for such education; to get more teachers involved in the promotion of gifted education; to facilitate the development of curriculum support; to allow schools to nominate students with potentials to receive gifted education; the Education Department should allow more eligible students to receive appropriate educational services; schools should be provided with additional resources to cater for the development and needs of gifted students; teachers should be provided with more professional support from the Education Department to facilitate the implementation of the gifted education programmes; Education Department should provide more professional support to schools to facilitate the implementation of gifted education programmes; to extend these gifted education programmes to other schools; gifted students should have the right to receive educational opportunities appropriate to their needs, so as to develop their potentials. Most of the parents of the primary and

secondary school students fully agreed that more teachers should take part in gifted education and that schools should be provided with additional resources to cater for the development and needs of gifted students.

Chapter 8 : In-depth Case Analysis

Salient features of the school-based approach

It could be seen from the in-depth case studies that in the course of implementing the curriculum for gifted students, schools should work out the contents of their own curriculum approaches in the light of their own needs. This is the essence of the school-based curriculum development work. This report has incorporated eight cases for in-depth study, each shedding light on the actual situation and background of implementing curriculum for gifted students in these schools, as well as their implementation strategy, curriculum content, and the compatibility of the existing implementation mechanism, school ethos and co-operation between students and teachers, triangulated to form the final analysis. As shown in the case studies, schools participating in the pilot scheme had, as far as possible, made good use of the support system within and outside the school to expedite the implementation, e.g. by creating an atmosphere of collaboration between colleagues in school, building up team spirit and networking of resources and bringing in the support of parents. They also tried to employ appropriate implementation strategy and methods, e.g. making use of implementation strategy to fit in with students' abilities, gradually evolving from the pull-out approach to the within-class and whole-school approach, formulating a school-based policy, using an integrative approach to curriculum planning, expedite diverse training and building up a comprehensive record system to facilitate the development of such gifted education programmes. These are the distinctive features found in the schools participating in the Pilot Project. Each case reflected the strenuous efforts made by the schools. Each of these endeavours has its own characteristics and effects, which deserves to be modelled upon by schools interested in developing activities for gifted students.

Chapter 9 : Summary of Recommendations

In Summary, the report has made the following recommendations :

Identification procedure and tools :

9.1 It is recommended that there is a need to set out clearly an identification procedure which will enable parents and teachers to realise the roles and expectations of all the parties involved. In this connection, there is a need to :

- (1) Enhance teachers' awareness on identification as well as to improve and widen the use of assessment tools so as to strengthen their understanding of the gifted and their competency in assessing these children.

- (2) Enhance parents' and teachers' understanding of the referral procedures for gifted students.

9.2 In expanding gifted education services, we need to consider the allocation and co-ordination of resources. We also need to avoid the abuse of identification services and the possible of labelling effects on gifted students to cause unnecessary pressure on them. Therefore, the identification of gifted students and the criteria adopted should be in line with the objectives and contents of the school-based curriculum or the services to be provided.

9.3 It is not recommended to use a single criterion to assess whether a student should join the school-based programme for high potential students. The Identification procedure, in general, should include the following stages :

- (1) Recommendations for making referrals : Since information from the school is required to support the identification of a gifted student, parents, teachers, social workers, guidance officers and other professionals must make their referrals through the school of the student.
- (2) Assessment : Information from multiple sources and different assessment criteria can be used as criteria to identify gifted students, these might include academic performance, intelligence assessments and behavioural checklists designed for teachers and parents, etc.
- (3) Arrangement for selection and activities : Based on the individual needs of gifted students, arrangements should be made for the students to take part in the appropriate school-based activities or other enrichment programmes for the gifted.

9.4 Regarding the target population for gifted education, it is recommended that :

- (1) The primary target of the school-based programmes should include students who are academically gifted, intellectually gifted and highly creative. Therefore, the school-based project should be renamed as "School-based Programme for High Ability Students" in the future to avoid any misunderstanding that the programme is only designed for the academically gifted.
- (2) The means of support should be strengthened to cater for the special needs of certain gifted students, e.g. those with emotional problems.

Teacher Training :

9.5 Regarding teacher training on gifted education, it is recommended that :

- (1) Gifted education should be included in pre-service or in-service teacher education courses to enhance teachers' understanding of gifted education.
- (2) School-based training programme for all teachers of a school should be provided for schools which are interested in implementing gifted education programmes.
- (3) In order to be effective, teacher training should meet the needs of a school. Therefore, school-based training programmes should be implemented by the following phases which keeps in pace with the development of school-based programmes a school:
 - (a) Conceptions of gifted education services and the characteristics of gifted students;
 - (b) Application of identification procedures and tools;
 - (c) Design and implementation of gifted education curriculum;
 - (d) Curriculum assessment and evaluation;
 - (e) Identification of the special educational needs of individual students and the possible interventions to cater for these needs.
- (4) Affective element for these teacher training should be strengthened.
- (5) Teacher training courses can be jointly organised by the Curriculum Development Institute and the Services Division.

Professional support :

9.6 Regarding professional support, it is recommended that :

- (1) The Education Department should provide professional support on identification as well as curriculum planning and implementation.
- (2) Schools should fully utilise the support from community resources within and outside the school, these include community organisations, parents or other professional bodies.

Implementation Strategies :

9.7 Regarding implementation strategies, it is recommended that :

- (1) Schools can decide whether to adopt the within-class or the pull-out approach in carrying out gifted education activities according to the specific situation in the school :
 - (a) Within-class teaching : School can start from the very basics by incorporating some important elements of gifted education, such as training of the thinking skills as well as introducing creative activities, self-learning strategies and student-centred approach in the existing subjects so as to lay the foundation for educating gifted children. The long-term objective is to develop teaching strategies that are able to attend to individual differences in the formal class, for example, adopting flexible groupings in learning, the differential use of cross-level learning materials and assignments etc.
 - (b) Pull-out programmes : The objective is to enable a group of students with similar ability to learn and to stimulate each other. Findings on the pilot project showed that teachers preferred to have about 15 students in each group. The student can be chosen from different classes. Another possible grouping across levels can be in the groups of junior primary (P.3-P.4) and senior primary (P.5-P.6) classes which would undergo affective or thinking skills training. Furthermore, project-based or subject-based programmes (e.g. in science, mathematics) can also be developed according to the needs of the students or the school.
- (2) Schools can also further explore other different approaches such as accelerated learning, module extension in implementing gifted education.
- (3) Schools should seek to reduce the labelling effect generated from identification so that gifted children can maintain a good relationship with other students, thus avoiding undue pressure on students or their parents.

Content and mode of teaching :

9.8 It is recommended that :

- (1) The curriculum and activities on gifted education should be geared to the needs of the students.

- (2) Schools should design and implement specific activities according to the actual situation in school, the specific needs of the students and the areas which are not covered in the existing curriculum.
- (3) Gifted education programme should be comprehensive and abrasive. Although activities on thinking are important, attention should also be paid to the affective development of students.
- (4) Teaching content can also be divided into three stages - starting from exploratory activities and self-awareness, followed by the enhancement in independent research skills and interpersonal relationship of the students, and then project-based or subject-specific development and self-actualisation.

Deployment of Manpower and Resources

9.9 It is recommended that :

- (1) Schools intending to implement gifted education programmes should set up a functional team responsible for the planning and co-ordination of the school-based gifted programmes.
- (2) In accordance with the proposal included in the "Report of the Subcommittee on Special Education" of the Board of Education (1996), primary schools which have shown continual success in the implementation of school-based programmes for high ability students should be provided with a special needs co-ordinator when the Subcommittee's proposal are fully supported by resources. This teacher should be responsible for developing strategies within the school to deal with individual differences and at the same time plan school-based gifted education and training programmes pertaining to the school-based curriculum development.
- (3) As support from the public is necessary if implementation of gifted education programmes is to be successful, adequate participation from other teachers would help to promote the programme. Therefore, school-based training should also be provided to enhance other teachers' sense of recognition and participation.

Parents' participation

9.10 It is recommended that :

- (1) Schools should foster communication and co-operation with parents. Importance should be placed on parents' understanding of the objectives of gifted education programmes and the characteristics of gifted children so that they will have reasonable expectations both on

the programmes and the children. Schools may consider organising school-based activities and providing support for parents as well.

- (2) The knowledge, skills and enthusiasm of parents can be one of the impetuses to the implementation of gifted education. Schools may emphasise the parents' role as a resource provider by, for example, arranging them to be part of volunteers, speakers, instructors and teaching assistants in the programmes.

Record and assessment :

9.11 It is recommended that :

- (1) Schools should strengthen their record system on the programme planning and evaluation.
- (2) Though school-based development is a key direction for expanding gifted education, the Education Department can develop a mechanism to gather and collate the experience of individual schools and teachers. Such valuable information on the activities and the assessment of students obtained can be placed at the Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre for purposes of experience-sharing and easy reference by teachers.

The Way Forward

9.12 Gifted education should aim at helping students of high potential to explore and develop their potentials.

9.13 Gifted education should be included in the regular curriculum and be conducted in normal classes.

9.14 To be ready for the expansion of school-based programmes for high ability students, divisions in the Education Department responsible for gifted education should set up new teams as follows :

- (1) Services Division should set up an identification team to identify gifted children for the school-based programme and to deal with cases with special educational needs.
- (2) The Curriculum Development Institute should set up a new team to assist schools which implement school-based programme, to plan and design gifted curriculum according to gifted students' characteristics and needs. The new team should also help individual schools to share their experiences with other schools and to monitor the progress of these programmes.

9.15 The Fung Hon Chu Gifted Education Centre under the Curriculum Development Institute, besides experimenting new enrichment programmes, should continue to serve the following roles:

- (1) play the role as a gifted education resource centre;
- (2) organise in-service training for teachers;
- (3) explore new modes of gifted education; and
- (4) promote exchanges and research work on gifted education.

9.16 The report recommended that gifted education development should be paced carefully and be developed in a progressive manner. Training should be provided for teachers on the implementation of programmes and the skills to identify gifted students prior to the commencement of school-based curricula. It also recommended to let teachers and parents realise the importance of developing students' potentials.

9.17 It is anticipated that the development of gifted education in Hong Kong will lead to an expansion in the scope and number of gifted education programmes. The Education Department can liaise with organisations which are interested in developing gifted education, to co-ordinate and plan for the future development of gifted education in the region.

9.18 There is a strong urge for educators to explore options and consolidate experiences to incorporate gifted education as part of quality education and integrate it into the new educational initiatives by conducting longitudinal studies. The expansion of gifted education will have positive and important bearing on the identification and cultivation of high calibre people for Hong Kong. Such expansion can also contribute to new attempts and experiences for quality teaching and learning on the whole. Therefore, it is worthwhile to allocate the required resources for the development of gifted education.

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