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## Provision within the classroom

### What should be distinctive about inclusive provision for rural G&T learners?

Rural schools face a dual challenge in enriching learning for G&T learners – how to make full use of their rural environment and yet how to provide opportunities for learners to see and aspire to potential futures way beyond their local community.

Rural schools are often the lynchpin of their local community, promoting rural opportunities, occupations and careers in partnership with that community. Such schools, often small, can be pivotal to the survival of their community as a viable entity. For these schools there is a desire to use their rural location to enhance and extend the curriculum, augmented by supplementary learning opportunities, which can in turn draw heavily on the community.

For urban schools whose catchment includes rural communities the priorities are often less clear. To what extent should a school in a market town, for instance, prioritise the development of rural skills as part of its programme of teaching and learning?

Many schools currently choose not to do this, opting for a more 'mainstream' curriculum. This may take little account of the fact that rurality is important and that **there are meaningful differences between the needs of rural learners, even within a particular school.**

Schools must start by looking at what they are trying to achieve. If there are pockets of underachievement regarding rural learners then this can often be tackled without the direct use of the rural context. Where poor literacy is highlighted as a particular problem, a whole school or a more targeted intervention need not involve learning about rurality. *Rural issues do not necessarily require what we might call a rural solution.*

This section poses positive questions to enable a school to review the extent to which its curriculum is sensitive to the needs of rural learners, in terms of formal and informal learning opportunities, both within and beyond the classroom.

## Curriculum

Element 4 of the IQS relates to how the curriculum is designed to match the learning needs of G&T learners. As schools move across the standard, the expectation is that formal curricular learning becomes more flexible to the needs and interests of learners and has a greater emphasis on enabling them to identify new and potential areas of future expertise. Developments extend beyond the curriculum but are also intended to complement mainstream learning to develop the long-term motivation and engagement that leads to high achievement.

This relates squarely to the view of *giftedness as expertise in a development stage*, that the purpose of a G&T strategy is to enable learners to see their long-term potential in terms of a range of opportunities and choices, both within and beyond their rural community. It also strongly supports the view that the purpose of gifted education is to develop the talent pool within the school, not just of its learners, but also of its staff and the wider community.

### Community as curriculum

Schools can utilise their rural environment in diverse ways, ranging from formal, school-wide programmes to more piecemeal approaches. These may include:

- accredited curriculum pathways such as rural science at Key Stage 3 or GCSE courses
- themed events such as a farming fortnight, or enterprise week
- engaging with local history, traditions and culture
- recognising and building on learners' own life experiences and skills
- widening cultural perspectives, including experiencing national as well as global diversity
- opportunities to identify and pursue new interests and skills
- engagement with research intensive universities not just local higher education.

### IQS Element 4: Enabling curriculum entitlement and choice

Entry (En)	Developing (De)	Exemplary (Ex)
i. Curriculum organisation is flexible, with opportunities for enrichment and increasing subject/ topic choice. Pupils are provided with support and guidance in making choices	i. The curriculum offers opportunities and guidance to pupils which enables them to work beyond their age and/or phase, and across subjects or topics, according to their aptitudes and interests	i. The curriculum offers personalised learning pathways for pupils which maximise individual potential, retain flexibility of future choices, extend well beyond test/ examination requirements and result in sustained impact on pupil attainment and achievement

How does the school's curriculum exploit its rural location to provide opportunities for G&T learners?  
 How does the school enable learners to aspire to and progress beyond the potential constraints of the rural environment?  
 How does the school use Information Advice and Guidance to enable positive choices to be made?  
 How does the school ensure the impact of these opportunities on participation, attainment and progression and future aspirations of its gifted rural learners?

G&T learners need to be actively involved in their own learning, self-evaluation and goal-setting to promote a wide range of aspirations and potential for achievement. As part of this the school needs to play a central role in shaping expectations and sustaining engagement.

This aspect of rural characteristics is further explored in section 4 and the accompanying website will detail examples of what these look like in schools in many different rural and coastal contexts.

## Classroom challenge

Much attention has been given to the question of what good teaching and learning looks like for G&T learners. This commonly takes the form of using whole school initiatives which have a classroom dimension such as APP to develop deeper understanding of learners' needs and to capture successful approaches in a form that can be shared across the school.

Strategies such as higher order thinking or differentiated questioning, which are accepted as part of normal classroom practice for G&T learners, may have to be adapted in response to the needs of the individual.

As with all aspects of the inclusion agenda, teachers need to be sensitive to issues which rural learners may have in developing learning dispositions, such as risk taking; potential gaps in cultural, social and linguistic capital or other factors which may affect their ability to engage fully in challenging learning and in formal assessments.

Another well-documented finding suggests that the depth of relationship in many rural schools between the teacher and the G&T learner enables a very real sense of personalising learning, supported by direct and frequent contact with parents/carers.

### IQS Element 2: Effective provision in the classroom

Entry (En)	Developing (De)	Exemplary (Ex)
i. The school/college addresses the different needs of the G&T population by providing a stimulating learning environment and by extending the teaching repertoire	i. Teaching and learning strategies are diverse and flexible, meeting the needs of distinct pupil groups within the G&T population (e.g. able underachievers, exceptionally able)	i. The school/college has established a range of methods to find out what works best in the classroom, and shares this within the school/college and with other schools and colleges
ii. Teaching and learning is differentiated and delivered through both individual and group activities	ii. A range of challenging learning and teaching strategies is evident in lesson planning and delivery. Independent learning skills are developed	ii. Teaching and learning are suitably challenging and varied, incorporating the breadth, depth and pace required to progress high achievement. Pupils routinely work independently and self-reliantly
iii. Opportunities exist to extend learning through new technologies	iii. The use of new technologies across the curriculum is focused on personalised learning needs	iii. The innovative use of new technologies raises the achievement and motivation of G&T pupils

How are the meaningful differences in the needs of individual rural learners understood in the classroom?  
 What strategies does the school see as relevant in terms of (i) access and support (ii) challenge for rural learners?  
 How is differentiation used to provide support and challenge for rural learners?  
 How does the school positively address any narrowness or resistance relating to social, cultural and linguistic capital?  
 How does the school use video-conferencing to engage with other communities and cultures?  
 How does the school use virtual learning environments to enrich, stretch and challenge?  
 In small schools, how is differentiation used to support and challenge learners in mixed year classes?  
 How does the small school network with others in order to meet the wider needs of G&T learners?

# How can we make it happen?

**Consider how your school can balance provision in order to utilise its rural location whilst presenting learners with a wide range of opportunities and cultural perspectives.**

**In relation to specific rural learners, review:**

- **how your school currently provides opportunities to identify areas of potential expertise and how provision interacts with their needs and interests**
- **how your school's established approaches to teaching and learning for G&T learners need to be explicitly geared towards the challenges presented by rurality**
- **interesting practice in similar schools which are known to be successful.**

**Agree actions to match opportunities more closely to rural learners' needs and to develop teacher capacity to support and challenge.**

