

Transitioning from ECE to School for Gifted Young Learners

**The Importance of Working Together Collaboratively –
children & families & teachers ECE and Primary & outside
agencies...**

*Carola Sampson
GiftEDnz & Taranaki Gifted Community Trust*



Overview

- **Definition of Giftedness**
- **Scales and Characteristics**
- **The Importance of Recognition – a lifetime of giftedness**
- **Social and Emotional Issues**
- **Good Pedagogical Documentation as base for Assessment**
- **Assessment in ECE for documenting, revealing progress and learning, planning AND supporting transition to School**
- **Transition to School**
- **Working together (ECE teachers and New Entrants teachers as powerful Transition Agents)**
- **Resources for Teachers, Parents & Children**





Just a couple definitions.....

A gifted child is one **who performs or has the ability to perform at a level significantly beyond his or her chronologically aged peers and whose unique abilities and characteristics require special provisions and social and emotional support** from the family, **community and educational context**.

(Cathie Harrison, 1998; 2005)

Giftedness designates the possession and use of outstanding **natural abilities**, called aptitudes, in at least one ability *domain*, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers.

Talent designates the outstanding mastery of **systematically developed abilities**, called competencies (knowledge and skills), in at least one *field* of human activity to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers who are or have been active in that field. (Francoys Gagné, 2009)



Characteristics of Giftedness Scale

- reasons well (good thinker)
- learns rapidly
- extensive vocabulary
- excellent memory
- long attention span (if interested)
- sensitive (feelings hurt easily)
- shows compassion
- perfectionist
- intense
- morally sensitive
- strong curiosity
- perseverant in areas of interest
- prefers older companions or adults
- wide range of interests
- great sense of humour
- early or avid reader
- keen observer
- vivid imagination
- highly creative
- tends to question authority
- introvert
- facility with numbers
- good at jigsaw puzzles
- concerned with justice, fairness
- shows compassion
- early language development
- enjoyment and speed of problem solving
- early use of symbol systems
- capacity for symbolic thought
- more complex play patterns
- personal maturity
- heightened concentration
- early interest in time (clocks, etc.)
- recognition of letters before age 2
- early ability to count
- early ability to put 20 piece puzzle together by age 3)
- ability to sight read / early reader by age

(Silverman, 2013)

Giftedness can be Hidden

- **Challenging behaviour**
- **Overexcitabilities** (intense experiencing, feeling)
- **Asynchronous** (uneven) development
- **Culture**
- **Temperament** (introversion, etc...), resilience
- **Language barrier**
- **Learning difficulty** (dyslexia, dyspraxia, slow output processing, etc ...)
- **Disability** (twice-exceptional)
- **Learning style** etc, etc ...
- Other issues like anxieties, selective mutism, SPD, etc...

... making it more difficult for teaching staff to notice, recognise and respond.

5 areas of overexcitability (Dabrowski)

- **Psychomotor** - surplus of energy, movement, restlessness, compulsive chattering, can't sit still, need to move in order to think, moving hands and feet, impulsive actions, nervous habits (nail biting, etc..), acting out
- **Sensual** - enhanced sensory and aesthetic pleasure, seeing, smelling, tasting, hearing, delight in sounds of words, music, form, colour, strong dislike of smells and food, texture, dislike of feel of clothing, -labels, etc...
- **Intellectual** - intensified activity of the mind, curiosity, concentration, avid reading, detailed visual recall, perfectionism, etc...
- **Imaginational** - free play of imagination, facility for invention and fantasy, poetic, dramatic, magical thinking, imaginary worlds, imaginary friends, etc..
- **Emotional** - feelings and emotions intensified, extremes of emotions, identification and awareness of others feelings, strong emotional ties and attachments to persons, places, things, difficulty adjusting to new environments, loneliness, etc..

(Daniels & Piechowski, 2009; Piechowski, 2006; 2014)

For ECE teachers and Parents of gifted children to consider more school visits and commencing those visits earlier to foster relationships with school teacher and counteract stress, possible anxieties, etc....

Identifying gifted and talented young children

Why?

- to nurture their **Well-being**, to ensure they **belong**, to ensure opportunities for learning are equitable (and inclusive) and **contributions** are valued, to ensure **children's languages and symbols** of their own and other cultures are promoted and protected, to let children learn through active **exploration** of the environment..
- to safeguard children's rights to personal dignity, and equitable opportunities for participation....to acknowledge that there is considerable variation between individual children as well as different cultural perspectives.....
- to reveal individual abilities, skills and interests in order to nurture and further develop them
- to enable gifted and talented children to find out and follow their passions ... throughout their school lives and beyond!
- to provide an educational experience that strives towards excellence
- to avoid underachievement (MoE, 1996; 2012; 2013)

Where? Early childhood settings, Primary school, Secondary school; through nomination by parents, teachers, peers and self; through formal tests, psychological assessments, assessments (narratives, etc...)

Case study: The Inventor – academic underachievement for 10 years of school life

Case study: Liam's transition from ECE to school –academic underachievement first 4 years of school

- The impact of educational environments on gifted children's wellbeing and talent development cannot be underestimated
- Collaborative relationships between teachers and parents (including students) are vital
- Members of all three education sectors need to work together to ensure a better transition for gifted students
- a shared understanding about the various learning environments by all involved for the benefit of all their children/students – including their gifted students
- **Collaborative partnerships in gifted Education are essential - let's talk and work together**



Assessment in ECE for documenting, revealing progress and learning, planning AND supporting transition to School.

Assessment is used by teachers to

- find out about children's interests,
- what children already know,
- their progress of learning,
- what new learning opportunities might be appropriate,
- and where additional support might be required.
- Teachers use knowledge gained from assessment to document learning and plan, facilitate and extend children's learning based on individual and shared interests

***E-portfolios like EDUCA;
StoryPark; etc....***

***New entrants teachers can be
'invited' to child's e-portfolio by
parents during transition – case
study Frederick***

Assessment should also support transition from home, to school and other learning environments through encouraging parents **to share portfolios with school teachers** and/or provide access to their children's (e-)portfolio during transition!

What goes into a portfolio?

- Learning stories (with added child's, parent's voices)
- Individual goals and parent aspirations
- Anecdotes
- Other observation (running records, etc.....)
- Photos (with and without comments)
- Photos of artwork
- Parent's and family's contributions (anecdotes, photos, learning stories)
- Snap shots of learning
- Meaningful achievements outside kindergarten (awards, etc....)
- Parent's notes on child's interests
- Individual Education Plans
- Video clips

....to reveal previous learning, skills, abilities and progress of learning and gradually developing school readiness.....



Narrative Assessment Benefits

- Not limited to a small range of academic areas – supports multi-categorical definition of giftedness (not just academic!!)
- Documents what is “not easily assessable”
- Links learning to children’s individual goals and curricula (ECE, School)
- Reveals progress of learning through linking learning stories and other pedagogical documentation in portfolio (within the stories themselves & with the use of hyper links – eportfolios)
- Consistent approach for all children
- Focuses on strengths & competencies
- Includes child/teacher/family voice
- Acknowledges context and culture
- Can reveal school readiness (*which also includes the readiness of families*)
- Should be used as supportive tool for transitions (to school and other learning environments)

(Margrain, 2011; McLachlan, et al., 2013)



“School readiness implies that.....

....students have developed or developing a sense of self, autonomy and a desire to explore, and the language and behaviours needed for social and emotional expression and self-regulation.”

(Webster-Stratton, 2012)

....including persistence with learning something new, focused activity, cooperation, emotion regulation and patience.

- *Being able to follow teacher’s directions*
- *Listening to teachers and peers*
- *Independence while working*
- *Exploring and trying out ideas*
- *Being curious about how things work*
- *Cooperating with other students on projects*
- *Early literacy & numeracy (letter, number, shape, colour knowledge)*
- *Problem-solving, trying again*

(Webster-Stratton, 2012)

- *Thinking*
- *Using language, symbols and text*
- *Managing self*
- *Relating to others*
- *Participating and contributing*

Key competencies in The New Zealand School Curriculum (2007)

Te Whāriki (ECE)

Wellbeing (*Trust and
Playfulness – Being involved*)

Belonging (*Courage and
Curiosity- Taking an
interest*)

Contribution (*Responsibility-
taking responsibility*)

Communication (*Confidence-
Expressing a point of view/feeling*)

Exploration (*Perseverance- Persisting with
difficulty, challenge and uncertainty*)

**Assessment (pedagogical
documentation in portfolios;
e-portfolios)**

Thinking

Using language,
symbols and text

Managing self

Relating to others

Participating and contributing

















**The New Zealand (School)
Curriculum 2007**

*And others like Tātaiako,
Philosophy etc....*

















(Carr & Lee, 2012; MoE, 2007)

Example - How might that look in e-portfolios?

What learning do I think is happening here? (optional)

B *I* U       Font Size Font Family          

Opportunities and possibilities? (optional)

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Key Competencies (NZ Primary School)

Te Whāriki (Early Childhood)

Curriculum Goals


Key Competencies (NZ Primary School)

Key Competencies


-  Thinking
-  Using language, symbols, and texts
-  Managing self
-  Relating to others
-  Participating and contributing

Te Whāriki (Early Childhood)



CONTRIBUTION

-  Children experience an environment where they are affirmed as individuals.


COMMUNICATION

-  Children experience an environment where they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.

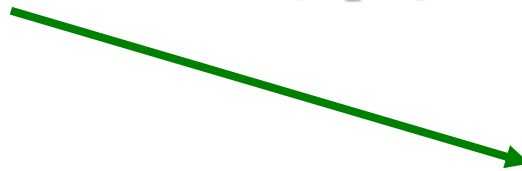
EXPLORATION

-  Children experience an environment where they learn strategies for active exploration, thinking, and reasoning.
-  Children experience an environment where they develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical, and material worlds.

Key competencies of the New Zealand School Curriculum are defined as follows....
“More complex than skills, the competencies draw also on knowledge, attitudes, and values in ways that lead to action. They are not separate or standalone. They are the key to learning in every learning area...” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p.12)

 tgc
TAFARIKI SIKIHO COMMUNITY TRUST

The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007; p. 41



“..The transition from early childhood education to school is supported when the school:

- fosters a child’s relationships with teachers and other children and affirms their identity;
- builds on the learning experiences that the child brings with them;
- considers the child’s whole experience of school;
- is welcoming of family and whānau.

This new stage in children’s learning builds upon and makes connections with early childhood learning and experiences. Teaching and learning programmes are developed through a wide range of experiences across all learning areas, with a focus on literacy and numeracy along with the development of values and key competencies.....”

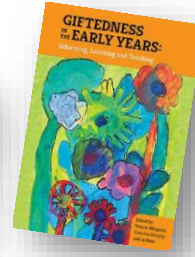
“Te Whariki: He Whariki Matauranga mo nga Mokopuna o Aotearoa, the curriculum for early childhood education, provides children with a foundation for ongoing learning. It is based on four principles: Empowerment, Holistic Development, Family and Community, and Relationships...”

“...Together, they (*the curriculum strands*) provide a foundation for lifelong learning. These strands correspond to the key competencies identified in this document...”



According to Peters (2010) key transition strategies include -

- Connecting with funds and knowledge
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Diverse assessment practice
- Making links between children's learning in ECE and School
- Fostering positive children's relation- and friendships
- Considering children's whole experience of school
- Providing rich, open-ended opportunities for play & learning
- Understanding the impact of rules and the way these can support belonging, but can also constrain children's behaviour and create anxiety
- Providing information and familiarisation activities for children and families
- Learning about children and their families
- Developing home-school partnerships
- building on funds of knowledge from early childhood education and home.



Consistent assessment practice in ECE

The sharing of portfolios

Use of e-portfolios (time-smart; efficient; multiple use)

More frequent school visits, including ECE teacher

Continuity & consistency through a shared understanding of child's learning by ECE teacher and School teacher

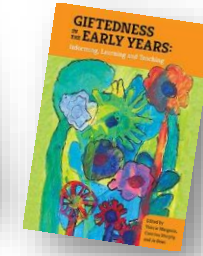
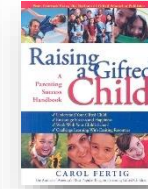
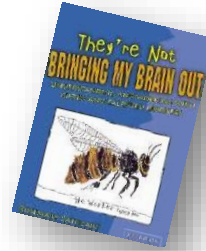
Gifted PLD for ECE & Schools

Empowering parents to be advocates!!

Good relationships –ECE, school, parents, child

Open communication channels by ALL involved

Where do we find resources, information....



- **Literature like...**

and the literature review: Transition from ece to school: Report to the Ministry of Education (Peters, 2010)

http://lnxweb1.manukau.ac.nz/data/assets/pdf_file/0008/85841/956_ECELitReview.pdf

or from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/ECE/98894/Chapter_6 (full pdf download to the right on page)

- **Websites like ...**

MoE's gifted Tki website <http://gifted.tki.org.nz/>

NZAGC discussion forum <http://old.giftedchildren.org.nz/forum/>

Peer reviewed gifted journal Apex <http://www.giftedchildren.org.nz/apex/>

- **Organisations like...**

NZAGC <http://www.giftedchildren.org.nz/>

GiftEDnz <http://giftednz.org.nz/>

New Zealand Center for Gifted Education NZCGE <http://nzcge.co.nz/>

- **Local organisations and Interest groups...**

Taranaki Gifted Community Trust TGC <http://www.tgctrust.org.nz/>

Taranaki Explorers <https://www.facebook.com/taranakiexplorers/>

Taranaki gifted preschooler coffee group (for gifted preschoolers & families)



HIGH ACHIEVER	A GIFTED LEARNER
Remembers the answers	Poses unforeseen questions
Is attentive	Is selectively mentally engaged
Generates advanced ideas	Generates complex, abstract ideas
Works hard to achieve	Knows without working hard
Answers the questions in detail	Ponders with depth and multiple perspectives
Performs at the top of the group	Is beyond the group
Needs 6-8 repetitions to master	Needs 1 to 3 repetitions to master
Enjoys the company of age peers	Prefers the company of intellectual peers
Understands complex, abstract humor	Creates complex, abstract humor
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Is pleased with own learning	Is self-critical
Gets A's	May not be motivated by grades

-adapted from *Differentiation: Simplified, Realistic, and Effective* by Bertie Kingore, 2004

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