VIEWS AND PRACTICES ON GIFTED EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLAND AND TÜRKİYE

Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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05.09.2025

Abstract

Gifted education encompasses the pedagogy, procedures, and theories for educating gifted and talented (G&T) children. Globally, the recognition of G&T children's needs has underscored the significance of this field. Governments typically adopt one of two policy approaches: one explicitly identifies and supports G&T children, as seen in Türkiye, while the other promotes equity by providing equal opportunities for all students, as in England.

This research explores how primary school teachers in non-selective schools in England and Türkiye approach the education of G&T children. It examines national policy contexts, teachers' interpretations of 'giftedness and talent,' and the pedagogies and methods they employ. In England, data collection focused on London schools selected based on socio-economic levels and free school meal eligibility. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and thematic analysis applied. In Türkiye, a purposive literature review was undertaken, with the emerging themes from England's thematic analysis applied to analyse the data through deductive content analysis.

Findings reveal that teachers in both countries primarily conceptualised giftedness and talent as academic success, emphasising cognitive traits like quick learning and strong memory. However, challenges differed significantly. In England, general education policies, such as rigid curricula and league tables, emerged as primary barriers to effectively addressing the needs of G&T children. Conversely, in Türkiye, teachers grappled with issues arising from both general and gifted education policies, including inadequate implementation and the lack of integration of gifted education into the primary school system. Common challenges included limited resources, insufficient teacher education, and time constraints.

Educational practices also varied. England employed diverse identification systems, with academic performance playing a key role, while Türkiye used a consistent nationwide identification process. English teachers favoured differentiation and enrichment activities, whereas Turkish teachers relied heavily on supplementary programmes like Science and Art Centres (SACs). Concerns about acceleration and grouping practices emerged in both countries. Despite differing approaches, significant barriers remain in addressing the needs of G&T children effectively.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to my supervisors, Prof. Philip Garner and Dr. Gwen Ineson, for their unwavering guidance, support, and patience throughout my PhD journey. Their insightful feedback and encouragement have been instrumental in shaping my research.

I sincerely thank Prof. Şeyda Sarı for contributing as the third reader, and Dr. Paula Zwozdiak-Myers for her insightful feedback and invaluable guidance, which have significantly enhanced the quality of my research.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my family, especially to Hatice Kalay, Safa Kalay, Emine Keskin, Musa Keskin, Dr. Ayse Gülay Keskin, Gupse Temur, Aytül Ülkebay, Seda Ertürk and Joanna Morton. Their endless love, support, and confidence in me have been the foundation of my academic journey.

I am also immensely thankful to Aysema Çankırı, Can Çankırı, and the entire Çankırı family for their warm friendship and encouragement. Their support during my doctoral studies has been invaluable, making me feel like a part of their family throughout this journey.

This research would not have been possible without the incredible contributions of all the participants. I am deeply grateful to each of you for generously sharing your time and valuable insights throughout this research.

I express my deepest gratitude to the Turkish National Education Ministry for the invaluable resources and support, which were essential in enabling me to carry out this research.

Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my father, Musa Kalay, and my brother, Özgür Gufit Çelik. Their legacy of love and strength continues to inspire and guide me every day.

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Chapter 1: My thesis: an overview

Several events have influenced me to undertake this research on teachers' views and practices related to gifted education in England and Türkiye. After graduating from a programme specifically designed to educate teachers to work with Gifted and Talented (G&T) children at the primary level, I worked in various roles as a teacher and gifted education coordinator in private schools in Türkiye. Throughout my time in these roles, I frequently discussed with other teachers the challenges they faced in educating these children and the appropriate pedagogical approaches to use in their learning and teaching. These conversations often revealed the complexity and inconsistency in how teachers conceptualised 'giftedness and talent', a socially constructed and slippery term, highlighting the lack of a shared understanding in practice (Renzulli, 2002; Sternberg, 2007).

I witnessed many instances where, for various reasons, the education of these children was neglected, and despite teachers doing their best, these children often did not receive the education they needed. During this period, I also observed that most teachers had not received any specific education on G&T children during their initial teacher training/education (ITT/E)[1] or in-service\continuing professional development (CPD) programmes[2]. However, I heard from teachers who participated in professional development programmes about how such education positively influenced their approach and improved their practices when working with these children. Many of these teachers were working in private schools, which generally had more resources dedicated to gifted education compared to state primary schools.

Based on my experience as a graduate of a specialised teacher education programme focused on gifted education, during which I completed my placement at the only state primary school in Türkiye that provided education for G&T children, and the time I worked as a teacher and gifted education coordinator, I acquired in-depth knowledge and practical experience in gifted education. These experiences provided me with valuable insight into how gifted education

[1] Despite the UK government's use of the term 'training,' many educators object to it. Being aware of this issue, I will use 'ITE' throughout this research, as synonymous with 'ITT'.
[2] In-service/continuing professional development (CPD) programmes' will be used synonymously in this research.

policies and practices are interpreted and implemented across different school settings. They also highlighted the importance of specialised education in gifted education, revealing significant differences in teachers' approaches to G&T children between those who have received such education and those who have not.

This made me wonder how teachers in state schools address the needs of G&T children with limited resources, and how differences in teacher education and policy frameworks influence their approaches and effectiveness. As a professional in the field of gifted education, driven by a deep commitment to equity, even though the field is often perceived as elitist, I became particularly curious about how England, a country driven by the tension between equity and excellence, approached gifted education.

During my master's studies in England, I undertook a research project to examine the provisions for G&T children in local authority primary schools and explore the factors influencing their education. Drawing on publicly available documents, a West London borough was selected as the case site for this research.

However, I always wondered what teachers were really doing inside these schools to support G&T children beyond what was documented in official reports and school policies. This curiosity grew stronger while writing my master's thesis, particularly when I encountered two significant studies. The first was the 2007 McKinsey report, which examined 25 of the world's school systems to understand why some systems were more successful than others. A key finding was captured in this quote: "The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers." (p.16) The second study was Shavinina's (2013) research on Nobel Prize winners, which highlights the crucial role of parents and teachers in their achievements. Notably, the study found that nearly all Nobel laureates credited at least one exceptional teacher during their elementary or secondary education as being instrumental in fostering their talents.

Motivated by these observations, I decided to focus on teachers in my research. Specifically, I sought to investigate the views and practices of teachers working in non-selective primary schools in Türkiye and England—two countries with markedly different approaches to gifted education. This focus stems from the limited understanding of how teachers in these contrasting policy environments interpret and implement G&T education policies, and why their approaches differ in practice, aiming to identify the challenges they encounter and highlight potential best practices that may be transferable between England and Türkiye. This relates to

a central goal of comparative education: learning lessons from the experience of different contexts to understand how educational policies and practices can be effectively adapted and implemented across diverse settings (Phillips, 2006). In this regard, the following questions were formulated for investigation:

- How do primary school teachers understand the terms 'gifted' and 'talented,' and consider their role in the identification and provision for G&T children?
- How do primary school teachers interpret, and apply national, local, or institutional gifted education policy?
- What challenges do primary school teachers face while implementing gifted education policies and provision and what steps do they take to overcome them?

Based on the research questions outlined below, within the scope of comparative education, my approach centres on gifted education as the basis of comparison rather than comparing entire education systems. In this regard, this research does not adopt a simplistic or direct equivalence approach. Instead, it recognises that the cultural, social, and political contexts in England and Türkiye shape the conceptualisation and implementation of gifted education in distinct ways.

The structure of this thesis is as follows: **Chapter 2:** traces the development of gifted education, starting from the first systematic efforts towards a conceptualisation of term and leading up to the present day. **Chapter 3**: explores the educational applications that have emerged or evolved to cater to this cohort, focusing on pedagogy that can be applied in the general education setting. **Chapter 4:** examines the formulation of gifted education policies through the lens of 'access for all'. It begins with a global perspective and then explores the specific policy contexts of the two countries covered in this research. **Chapter 5:** details the methodology adopted for this research, providing an in-depth explanation of the approach. **Chapter 6:** presents the thematic analysis of the data collected in England, discussing the findings based on this analysis. **Chapter 7:** presents the findings that emerged from the thematic analysis conducted on the primary data in England and applies these findings to the secondary data set identified in Türkiye. **Chapter 8:** draws final conclusions and explores the impact of this research.

Chapter 2: Gifted and Talented children: a conceptualisation of the term

2.1 Introduction

'Giftedness' and 'talent' are two commonly used concepts to define the unique population of gifted education. While talent can be seen as a subcategory of giftedness, these two concepts might be used interchangeably, which is a leading position in the literature. Besides, in some cases, giftedness can be conceptualised without any direct or indirect link to talent (Gagné, 2005). Although researchers in the field have attempted to understand, define, and measure these concepts for almost a century, there is no consensus on their definition in the field (White, Fletcher-Campbell and Ridley, 2003; Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius and Worrell, 2011). The ambiguity in the distinction between the concepts of 'giftedness' and 'talent' is an ongoing conceptual discussion, along with what we mean by these terms in the field. Furthermore, the concept of giftedness and talent is often perceived as a vague concept. This occurs when one word or concept is utilised to elucidate another, as exemplified by the traditional practice of using intelligence to define giftedness and talent (Smedsrud, 2020).

However, it is widely accepted that 'giftedness' and 'talent' are socially constructed terms that reflect socio-cultural values in a given time and context (Sternberg, 2007). In this perspective, taking account of social context is a necessity in determining whether and how a person will be identified as gifted and talented. The research on gifted education highlights the different usage of the terms and an array of definitions of 'giftedness and talent' across countries (Renzulli, 2002; Sternberg, 2007). Recognising that various terms are used globally to describe this group of children, the term 'gifted and talented' will be used to refer to this cohort in this comparative research, while the actual process of their education will be referred to as 'gifted education.'

The cultural aspect of the concept and teachers' views and practices with respect to G&T children form an important and extended contextual discussion in this comparative research. Thus, it is important to note that, although I predominantly use the term 'gifted and talented ' throughout in this research, during the data collection phase, the terms preferred by the participating teachers, such as 'more able' and 'high achiever,' were used to facilitate conversations and were reflected in the transcripts. While I may not entirely agree with these terms, they were used in pursuit of enabling effective communication.

2.2 Defining the term

Across the centuries, humankind has always been interested in people who display superior ability. The interest of humankind in superior ability can be tracked through folklore, sagas, theology, philosophy, art, and, recently, empirical science. Even in prehistory, people were not unfamiliar with the notion of giftedness and talent, but the concept had been associated with divinity and mythology (Stanley, 1976; Renzulli, 1979; Lo, Porath, Yu, Chen, Tsai and Wu, 2019).

The intellectual history of the concept and its educational implementation began in the early 20th century, along with the mental testing movement (Borland, 2005). At the beginning of the conceptualisation of the term, it was highly associated with another constructed term, intelligence. Francis Galton (1822-1911) is a pioneer of this movement (Stanley, 1976). Based on Charles Darwin's (1859) *The Origin of Species*, Galton (1891) argued that "a man's natural abilities are derived by inheritance, under exactly the same limitation as are the form and physical feature of the whole organic world." (p. 1) By formulating the idea that humans take in all information through their senses, Galton claimed that individuals with high intelligence would have keener sensory abilities than individuals with low intelligence. To test his hypothesis, Galton developed several methods and apparatus to measure people's sensory abilities, such as vision, audition, smell, touch, and reaction time, and reported his findings in his famous book *Hereditary Genius*. However, Galton's instrument and techniques were

problematic for testing his hypothesis due to a lack of precision and reliability. Galton's statistical innovation for investigating giftedness resulted in him being credited as the 'grandfather of gifted education' (Galton, 1891; Johnson, McClearn, Yuen, Nagoshi, Ahern and Cole, 1985; Sternberg, 2000; Jolly, 2005; Davis and Rimm, 2014).

Forty years after Galton's *Heredity of Genius*, Alfred Binet (1857-1911) operationalised a series of tests with the aid of Theodore Simon (1873-1961) to identify children who would not benefit from regular classes and thus should be placed in special classes to meet their needs (Hollingworth, 1926). As stressed by Davis and Rimm (2014) "Binet tried a number of tests that failed. It seemed that normal students and dull students were not particularly different in (a) hand-squeezing strength, (b) hand speed in moving 50 cm (almost 20 inches), (c) the amount of pressure on the forehead that causes pain, (d) detecting differences in hand- held weights, or (e) reaction time to sounds or in naming colours" (p. 5). Then, in contrast to Galton's innate sensory approach to intelligence, Binet stressed the necessity of more complex mental processes to measure intelligence. Based on the measurement of language, memory, judgement, reasoning, and comprehension skills, the first modern intelligence test, the *Binet-Simon Scale,* was developed by Alfred Binet and Theodore Simon (Binet and Simon,1905). In the following years, they made some changes to the content of the test, including its regulation by age groups. *Binet-Simon Scale* started to be widely used around the world, and it has served as a basis for later intelligence tests (Binet and Simon, 1905:1998; Boake, 2002; Jolly, 2005; Davis and Rimm, 2014).

Lewis Terman (1877- 1956) is another influential psychologist whose name is synonymous with the field of gifted education. Terman's research and practices were fundamental extensions of the work of Francis Galton and Alfred Binet. After the *Binet-Simon Scale* was used in the United States in 1908, Terman studied the modification and Americanisation of this test and published the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale* in 1916 (Terman, 1916, Renzulli, 1979; Samuda, 1998). The Binet-*Simon scale* quantified the test taker's intelligence regarding intellectual level (later, mental age). Terman replaced the mental age with the Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale* has used the IQ as a measurement of intelligence. Since the Stanford-Binet intelligence scale was first published, it has undergone several revisions and continues to be used around the world (Boake, 2002; Barram and Roid, 2004). Terman also launched longitudinal study of high-IQ with the large number of children in the 1920s. Then, 1528 children (857 boys and 671 girls) were selected based on Stanford-

Binet test scores of 130 and above. Terman's sampling group almost represented one percent of the population, and their physical, psychological, social, and professional development was tracked for almost a half-century. Terman's longitudinal study provided insight relating to ability and its relationship to academic, vocational, and psychosocial outcomes (Terman, 1925:1954a; Terman and Oden, 1947:1956; Lynn, Vanhanen and Stuart, 2002; Jolly, 2005; Davis and Rimm, 2014).

Studies to measure intelligence via psychometric tests played a vital role in the development of gifted education as a discipline in academia and the corresponding development of specific programmes for children based on their performance on these tests. While these efforts significantly contributed to the emergence of gifted education as a recognised field of study, they were deeply influenced by biological determinism, particularly through eugenicist ideologies that framed giftedness and talent as an inheritable and fixed trait. Nevertheless, the application of IQ tests in the identification of giftedness and talent has been subject to substantial critique. Scholars have questioned the psychometric validity and reliability of these instruments, while also drawing attention to the cultural and socioeconomic biases inherent in their construction, biases that tend to privilege individuals from white, middle- and upper-class backgrounds, thereby marginalising others (Mansfield, 2015). This perceived elitism has sparked debates about the fairness and inclusivity of gifted education programmes, challenging educators and policymakers to reconsider the values and goals underpinning such initiatives (Sternberg, 1996).

In the following years, the IQ-based cognitive approach to intelligence were replaced with a multidimensional understanding of the concept, reflecting a paradigm shift within the field of gifted education (Smedsrud, 2020). Currently, multiple intelligence theories emerged that have moved us towards an expanding concept of giftedness and talent. These intelligence theories and the expanded definition of the concept have been categorised differently by different authors. For instance, based on the metaphors, Sternberg classified proposed intelligent theories under seven categories: geographic, computational, biological, epistemological, anthropological, sociological, and systems (Sternberg, 1990; 2000). Gardner, Kornhaber, and Wake (1996) proposed different schemas to classify these theories according to dominant perspectives: psychometric, developmental, biological, cognitive, and recent. In contrast to intelligence-based classifications, Renzulli divided all definitions into two categories: conservative and liberal, according to the restrictiveness of the definition (Renzulli,

2002). Even in the categorisation of the proposed theories, the emergence of diverse interpretations, coupled with the fact that many of these theories approach the concept from various angles, can be considered a result of the ambiguity in definition.

The paradigm shifts mentioned within the field were influenced by the replacement of 'a general intelligence approach' by a 'domain-specific ability approach' to concept. The *Marland Report* (1972) in the U.S.A. is the early groundwork for the domain-specific ability approach to concept (Matthews and Foster, 2005). As it was asserted by *Marland Report* (1972) that "Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programmes and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school programme in order to realise their contribution to self and society." (p.8)

Children who are capable of high performance are those who have demonstrated accomplishments or potential in a variety of areas. These include general intellectual aptitude, specific academic proficiency, creative and productive thinking, leadership potential, talent in the visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability in the arts (*Marland Report*, *op.cit.*).

Considering the period when this definition was first put forward, it was a watershed moment in terms of drawing attention to different ability areas within the concept. Also, underachieving children were included in the scope of gifted and talented children by emphasising 'demonstrated achievement and/or potential ability'. In the years following the publication of the *Marland Report*, the proposed definition was criticised in some respects, such as the lack of non-intellective (motivational) factors, and different approaches have emerged for the conceptualisation of intelligence (Renzulli, 1979; Davis and Rimm, 2014; Jolly and Robins, 2016). Despite the emergence of alternative conceptualisations of intelligence, the reliance on cognitive and mental measurement approaches remains prevalent today. Consequently, challenges persist in accurately identifying underachieving G&T students, indicating that the issues raised decades ago have yet to be fully addressed in current practices.

Renzulli (1979), one of those who came to the fore after the *Marland Report*. He proposed *the three-ring conception*, which focused on behaviours of G&T children rather than their characteristics. Renzulli emphasised that "Giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits — these clusters being above-average general abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity. Gifted and talented children are those

possessing or capable of developing this composite set of traits and applying them to any potentially valuable area of human performance." (p.87)

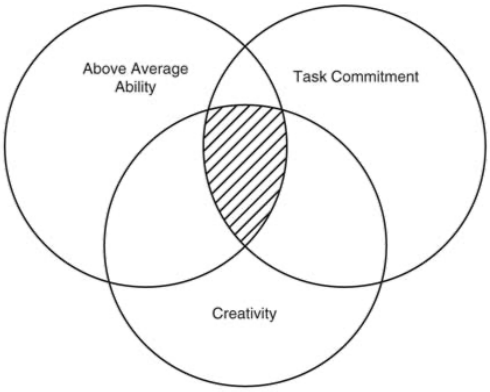


Figure 1: Renzulli's Three-ring Model (Davis and Rimm, 2014, p.21)

Above-average ability has two dimensions: general ability and specific ability. The first element refers to the capacity to process information along with the integration of experience to have appropriate and adaptive responses to new situations and engagement in abstract thinking such as verbal and numerical reasoning and memory. The second element is related to the capacity for acquiring knowledge and skills to perform in specific areas such as statistics, music, and astronomy. Above-average ability is defined as that possessed by those individuals performing in the top 15-20% of any domain mentioned. As in the *Marland Report*, Renzulli expanded the definition of the concept by including areas of above-average ability and opposed the manifesto that intelligence can be measured by testing. However, unlike the definition contained in the *Marland Report,* Renzulli paid attention to two new clusters in the definition of the concept: task commitment and creativity. He thus stated that (1979) "A second cluster of traits that are consistently found in creative/productive persons constitutes a refined or focused form of motivation known as task commitment. Whereas motivation is usually defined in terms of a general energising process that triggers responses in organisms, task commitment represents energy brought to bear on a particular problem (task) or specific performance area." (p.84) The third cluster of traits is creativity. It refers to a person having the capacity to generate interesting and feasible ideas, thus being recognised by his or her creative accomplishment (Renzulli, 2002).

Renzulli also made distinctions in the definition of the concept by asserting two types of giftedness: 'schoolhouse giftedness' and 'creative/productive giftedness'. Schoolhouse

giftedness is the kind associated with the lesson learner and children with high cognitive ability. Thus, it can be easily measured by mental measurement tests to select students for entrance into a special programme. On the other hand, the second type, creative/productive giftedness, refers to those who have the potential to become producers of original ideas, artistic expressions, or products (Renzulli, 1999).

Gardner was another proponent of a multifaceted approach to giftedness, who viewed intelligence from different angles. Gardner (p.x) defined intelligence as "the ability to solve problems, or create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings." (1993). He proposed *the theory of multiple intelligences* (MI theory) that included seven types of intelligence: verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal (Gardner, 1983). He then added one more component to his list as naturalist intelligence (see 'Appendix 1' for an explanation of this eight intelligence) (Gardner, 1999). It was stressed by Armstrong (2009) that "MI theory is not a type of theory for determining one intelligence that fits. It is a theory of cognitive functioning, and it proposes that each person has capacities in all eight intelligences. Of course, eight intelligences function together in ways unique to each person." (p.15). Instead of defining intelligence as a single construct, Gardner broadened the notion of intelligence and stressed the need to view intelligence in a cultural context (Gardner, 1987).

Like Gardner, Sternberg also rejected the notion that intelligence can be easily measured by a single test. Sternberg proposed his *triarchic theory of human intelligence* in the 1980s that it is comprised of three sub-theories: contextual, experiential, and componential intelligence. Contextual theory defines intelligence as a behaviour for adaptation, shaping, and selection of real-world environments relevant to one's life. The second sub-theory is experiential intelligence, which is attributed to cope with novelty and the automatisation of information processing (Sternberg, 1984, Heller, Mönks, Subotnik, and Sternberg, 2000). Sternberg (1984) has emphasised that "The third sub-theory relates intelligence to the internal world of the individual, specifying the mental mechanisms that lead to more and less intelligent behaviour. This sub-theory specifies three kinds of information-processing components (processes) that are instrumental in (a) learning how to do things, (b) planning what things to do and how to do them and I actually doing the things." (p.269) Sternberg later developed a broader theory of intelligence called the *theory of successful intelligence*, which regards intelligence as a dynamic entity rather than a fixed one. Sternberg's *theory of successful intelligence* defined all three

kinds of intelligence mentioned above as interactive component of successful intelligence which refers to the ability to be successful in life based on one's personal standards, within one's sociocultural context. A person's ability to achieve success depends on taking advantage of his or her strengths to correct or compensate for weaknesses (Sternberg, 1999; Renzulli, 2002; Sternberg and Grigorenko, 2002).

In this section, I have highlighted a selection of literature from early systematic attempts to conceptualise the term. While in the early period the definition was limited to the result of mental measurement tests influenced by eugenicist ideologies, this has subsequently been expanded to cover a wider range of abilities and a complex set of behaviours that take place in particular people, at particular times, and under particular circumstances (Plucker, 2001; Renzulli, 2002; Sternberg, 2007; Reis and Renzulli, 2010). Although the traditional IQ-based approach to giftedness and talent has been largely replaced by multidimensional models in theory, in practice, mental measurement tests and a focus on intellectual and academic abilities still dominate the identification process (Cao, Jung, and Lee, 2017; Hodges, Tay, Maeda, and Gentry, 2018). As a result, although the conceptualisation of giftedness and talent has shifted towards broader and more inclusive definitions, moving away from an IQ-based approach in theory, the continued widespread use of such tests in practice fails to fully capture this diversity and tends to privilege certain types of knowledge and ways of thinking, potentially overlooking talent in students whose abilities manifest in less conventional forms. Moreover, this approach overlooks the complex, dynamic interplay of factors, such as personality, environment, schooling, family background, and chance, that influence how potential is expressed and developed. As a result, many gifted and talented students, particularly underachievers who may require alternative support, remain unidentified and unsupported within current systems (Kaufman and Harrison, 1986; Renzulli, 2005; Reis and Renzulli, 2010).

Given the limitations of mental measurement tests discussed above, this research conceptualises giftedness and talent through the lens of the Talent Development Mega Model (TDMM), which offers a more inclusive and developmental perspective. This model addresses such issues by first promoting a departure from rigid, standardised approaches in favour of a flexible system of gifted services that support students across various stages and domains of development. Secondly, it moves beyond the traditional "identify then place" logic and instead advocates for the early provision of opportunities, with subsequent assessments tailored to the

specific subject areas to determine further needs (Subotnik, Olszweski-Kubilius and Worrell, 2021).

Building on this model and recognising that understandings of giftedness and talent are shaped by broader educational philosophies, political contexts, and societal structures, I have adopted a comprehensive definition of giftedness and talent to provide a common analytical ground for this comparative research between England and Türkiye (Cropley, 1993). This refers to the individual's potential or talent for high or outstanding achievement in academic or non-academic areas compared to others of the same age. Aspects of this are discussed in more detail in the "Theoretical orientation" section (Mönks and Pflüger, 2005)

2.3 Characteristics of Gifted and Talented Children

This section highlights how researchers have characterised the general traits of G&T children. Since the early empirical research in the field, researchers have sought to reveal the general characteristics of G&T children to identify this group (Johnsen, 2021). However, the focus of the research was limited to their intellectual and creative characteristics rather than their emotional nature. Currently, the focus in the field has moved from questions like who gifted and talented children are to how we can fulfil their extraordinary potential. In this context, the identification of common characteristics of G&T children provides a ground for defining their learning pathways and to developing an effective provision for meeting the needs of G&T children (Roeper, 1982; Ziegler, 2005; Dweck, 2009).

A growing body of literature has agreed that some indicators are associated with the characteristics of G&T children. These can be grouped into two main categories: cognitive and affective characteristics (Delisle and Galbraith, 2002; Clark, 2002; Manning, 2006). Research has predominantly focused on the direct impact of the advanced cognitive abilities of G&T children on their academic achievement (Kuncel, Hezlett and Ones, 2004). Cognitive characteristics of G&T children could be listed as processing and retaining a large amount of

information, having varied interests, having high curiosity, learning things at an earlier age than peers, like reading, having a long attention span, having a strong memory, having a high level of language development, and having verbal ability (Chuska, 1989; Clark, 2002; Manning, 2006; Davis and Rimm, 2014).

The affective characteristics of G&T children has been explored since Terman's (1926) longitudinal study, with researchers examining the unique social and emotional traits of G&T children. The literature shows conflicting research findings related to this issue. For instance, while Terman's (1926) longitudinal study concluded that G&T children are in general socially and emotionally well-adjusted, Hollingworth (1926) claimed that the age and physical development of the child lags behind their mental development, making G&T children emotionally and socially more vulnerable. It is now recognised that the interaction between internal factors such as motivation and stress and environmental factors like parental behaviours is seen as determinative for affective characteristics and that G&T children show different social and emotional traits that are unique to each child. These can vary, and include perfectionism, heightened sensitivity to intensity, high expectations of self and others, an advanced level of moral judgement at an early age, a highly developed sense of humour, and advanced levels of moral maturity with consistency between values and actions, self-discipline (Clark, 2002; Manning, 2006; Shi and Qu, 2022). While some of these characteristics be perceived negatively, teachers and classmates of G&T children generally tend to associate giftedness and talent with more positive characteristics (Moon, and Brighton, 2008; Oh, Sutherland, Stack, Badia Martín, Blumen, Nguyen, Wormald, Maakrun, and Ziegler, 2019).

When discussing the effective characteristics of G&T children, it is important to mention identification and its potential negative effects. Previously, an IQ-based approach to giftedness and talent was more dominant, but there is a growing movement towards a more holistic approach, exemplified by models such as Gardner's *MI theory* and Renzulli's *Three-Ring Conception*. This is reflected in the diverse methods of identification now commonly used, which may include intelligence tests, achievement tests, creativity tests, teacher, parent, and peer nominations, as well as product and performance assessments. In essence, while intelligence tests continue to be a component, they are generally no longer considered the sole criterion for identifying these students. Additionally, the focus within gifted education is increasingly shifting away from rigid 'special categorisation'. Instead, there is a greater emphasis on addressing the diverse learning needs of all students, often with the aim of

minimising labels where possible. This evolving perspective acknowledges that even well-intentioned labels for gifted and talented children can, at times, become restrictive and potentially affect their socio-emotional development. Consequently, the practice of strictly labelling these learners is increasingly being re-evaluated or de-emphasised (Borland, 2005; Dweck, 2006; Berlin, 2009; Davis and Rimm, 2014).

Furthermore, it is worth noting that within the G&T population, there exists a distinct sub-group known as Dual and Multiple Exceptionalities (DME), Twice Exceptionality (2E). These terms are used interchangeably to describe a group of children who exhibit high learning potential or ability alongside one or more special needs or disabilities (Ryan and Waterman, 2018). These individuals possess a unique combination of distinctive traits. Baum and Owen have defined a member of this subpopulation of G&T children as "a child who exhibits remarkable talents or strengths in some areas and problematic weaknesses in others." (2004, p.29). Depending on the strengths and weaknesses of these children, DME learners often exhibit different personal traits (see 'Appendix 2'). Given the complexity of the issue, disability usually masks high learning potential or ability; in some cases, high learning potential or ability may mask disability, or they may mask each other, and children with multiple exceptions may not be identified as either gifted or learning disabled (Baum, 1989; Reis and Renzulli, 2011; Cioè-Peña, 2018).

Negative perceptions and conflicting views regarding both G&T children and children with special educational needs (SEN) could hinder policymakers in promoting equality in education. Disagreement, conflict, and negative assumptions within these fields may obstruct efforts to create inclusive and equitable policies. For instance, while the concept of inclusion has gained attention in gifted education research, the focus has often shifted towards lower-achieving students, leading to the neglect of the needs of G&T children. Conversely, critics of market reforms in education and proponents of inclusive education argue that such reforms have widened the gap between low-achieving and more-able students, further marginalising SEN learners within mainstream education (Jolly *et al*., 2012). These conflicting priorities and perspectives complicate the development of policies that address the needs of children with dual or multiple exceptionalities and the broader goal of promoting equality in education.

Additionally, in some cases, approaches towards policy and provision for children with SEN could differ from the approaches within the field of gifted education. For instance, while the education system has adopted an inclusive approach for children with SEN, it can provide segregated educational provision for G&T children context may complicate locating provision for DMA within education. The different educational approaches for both groups of students within the same educational context may complicate the establishing of provisions for DMA within the education system and result in overlooking both identification of children with DMA and the meeting of their needs.

Another reason could be that the concept of giftedness and talent differs as a function of culture and there is no right definition, and DME has often been closely identified with the G&T cohort (Sternberg, 2007). Therefore, the conceptual differences within giftedness could restrict the range of the student identified with DME. Furthermore, parallel to the conceptualisation and interpretation of giftedness and talent, the focus of education system could be reduced to academic ability, and children with aptitude and special needs could be excluded from provisions provided for DME.

Negative perspectives towards children with special educational needs could also adversely affect children with dual or multiple exceptionalities. For example, parents' and teachers' expectations play a crucial role in shaping students' outcomes. Research indicates that families and teachers often have low expectations for students with SEN (Boersma and Chapman, 1982). However, Englund, Luckner, Whaley, and Egeland (2004) highlighted the importance of parents setting high expectations for their children's achievements, viewing it as one of the most critical indicators of effective parenting. This is especially significant for G&T children (Campbell, Muijs, Neelands, Robinson, Eyre and Hewston, 2007). When children with DME are subjected to low expectations due to their special educational needs, it can hinder their identification, reduce opportunities for them to demonstrate their potential, and complicate the process of recognising and supporting their abilities.

Another issue is the critical role of teachers in identifying and providing effective support for twice-exceptional children. However, teachers, especially those in mainstream settings, often struggle to meet the needs of diverse learners due to a lack of knowledge (Forlin, 2001). The complexity of the issue has led to a shortage of teachers with the necessary joint education to address the needs of twice-exceptional children. This gap in teacher education remains a

significant barrier to providing effective support for DME learners (Feldman *et al*., 1995; Campbell *et al.,* 2007).

Due to the intricate relationship mentioned between the term of 'giftedness and talent' and disability, the children covered by the definition of DME may differ between countries (Neihart, 2008). Thus, when talking about children having special educational needs and high learning potential (DME), it is vital to describe carefully both what it means to be gifted and talented and how special educational needs are described within a given context to make a description of DME. In this regard, when highlighting gifted education policy and provision in England and Türkiye, if DME is considered within the gifted education policy context in these countries, it will also be addressed to give the whole picture of the gifted education landscape.

Chapter 3: Provision for Gifted and Talented Children

3.1 Introduction

A failure to meet needs of G&T children can lead to underachievement, preventing them from reaching their full potential. In some instances, it may even pose a risk of them dropping out of school (VanTassel-Baska, 2005; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021). Thus, scholars in the field of gifted education have invested significant research efforts in developing programmes and services to meet the needs of G&T children. Since most of these efforts in response to the recognition that conventional educational practices are insufficient in meeting the needs of these children result in applications that do not adhere to the constraints of predetermined curricula or conventional teaching methods, they tend to exhibit experimental characteristics (Renzulli, 2005). These efforts have yielded significant outcomes, such as the maintenance of high curriculum standards, and the use of a variety of ability assessments including portfolios, performance appraisals, and performance ratings (Gallagher, 1996). The implementation of such a provision often brings advantages for other students alongside G&T children. In this regard, the field of gifted education is regarded as a source of valuable insights, practises, ideas, resources, and pedagogy that are beneficial to general education. Consequently, the provisions and practices that have emerged to meet the needs of G&T children have become an integral component of general education, with the aim of enhancing the performance of all students (Reis, Gentry and Park, 1995; Renzulli, 2005; Reis and Renzulli, 2010).

Given this relationship with general education, and the increasing importance placed on the movement towards inclusive schooling, the present chapter focuses on G&T provision applied in general education, rather than presenting specific examples relating solely to education settings tailored to G&T children.

3.2 Core pedagogical principles for Gifted Education

Pedagogy is defined as the methods used by teachers to instruct and teach children. Selection of appropriate pedagogical approach is contingent upon several factors such as the content's nature, the characteristics and requirements of the student and the contextual consideration (Kaplan, 2003; Reis, Renzulli and Renzulli, 2021). Differential pedagogy, often referred to as differentiation is a core element of in-classroom strategies that enables teachers to effectively address diversity by tailoring a range of approaches to cater to the needs of students (Reis and Renzulli, 2010; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

Many programmes in gifted education developed over the past decades have been grounded in the principles of differentiation, with acceleration and enrichment emerging as two of its most commonly applied and conceptually significant components. These approaches aim to enhance the depth, complexity, and pace of learning, allowing instruction to be more appropriately aligned with the advanced cognitive abilities, learning profiles, and interests of G&T children (Olszewski-Kubilius and Thomson, 2003; Sak and Ayas, 2020).

This section begins with an examination of differentiation, which, together with enrichment and acceleration, constitutes a core set of pedagogical approaches frequently employed in the education of G&T children. The integrated use of these three approaches enables greater flexibility and responsiveness within mainstream classrooms, aligning well with contemporary inclusive education frameworks (Letzel-Alt and Pozas, 2023). Although other pedagogical approaches can provide valuable support, they are often implemented within or alongside the overarching structures of differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration. Focusing on these three interrelated approaches thus provides both theoretical coherence and practical applicability in diverse educational contexts.

3.2.1 Differentiation

The term differentiation is often used interchangeably with differentiated instruction or differentiated teaching. Some scholars distinguish between these two terms, but here I will use them interchangeably to refer to an approach which is based on the premise that learning and development are fostered when curriculum and instruction are aligned with the individualised, assessed needs, and capacities of the learners participating (Rogers, 2007; Roiha and Polso, 2021). Differentiation involves purposefully customising content, processes, products, and the learning environment by considering students' individual readiness, levels of interest, and distinct learning profiles. Here, 'content' refers to the knowledge that students are expected to acquire, 'process' refers to how students engage with and understand the content, encompassing the diverse activities used by teachers, and 'products' represent the various methods by which students demonstrate their acquired knowledge, serving as tangible manifestations of learning. Additionally, the term 'learning environment' refers to both the psychosocial learning environment and the classroom atmosphere. This personalised approach aims to effectively address the diverse needs of all students, including those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) as well as those identified as gifted and talented (Tomlinson, 2014).

Effective differentiation originates from recognising, embracing, and addressing individual differences in the classroom. This foundational step is rooted in the shared understanding that students may engage in diverse activities simultaneously. By building on the commonalities of the entire class while also considering students' differences, the aim is to create an environment where everyone can learn effectively (Tomlinson, 2001). Thus, the teacher should demonstrate proficiency in offering students with various opportunities through interactions with the entire class, engaging in small group activities, and facilitating individualised interactions at different stages within a unit or lesson. This involves conducting pre-assessment of learning and tailoring activities based on the pre-assessment results, adjusting the pace of learning, modifying the complexity level of different tasks, and incorporating a variety of instructional strategies (Davis and Rimm, 1989; VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh, 2005; Tomlinson, 2014). Thus, differentiation is both knowledge-centred, ensuring a depth of understanding in the content, and learner-centred, proactively and reactively prioritising the individual needs and preferences of students, aims to foster a more engaging and personalised educational

experience for each student (Tomlinson, Brighton, Hertberg, Callahan, Moon, Brimijoin, Conover and Reynolds, 2003; Roiha and Polso, 2021).

Differentiation, when misapplied, carries risks such as lowering expectations, particularly when in-class groupings are fixed (e.g., consistently assigning 'the bottom group' different tasks regardless of individual needs). In the context of accountability in education in England, there was pressure on teachers to demonstrate that they were meeting the diverse needs of their students. Teachers were expected to show they were differentiating their teaching by creating multiple worksheets or organising mini lessons for different groups. This expectation arose from an accountability system that prioritised measurable outcomes, leading teachers to focus on visible forms of differentiation, such as creating different materials for different ability levels. The issue with this approach was that it often created an unrealistic workload for teachers and led to the misconception that differentiation was only about preparing separate tasks or lessons, rather than focusing on more meaningful approaches like questioning, feedback, and outcomes. The problems arising from the misapplication of differentiation can be regarded as a 'baggage' associated with its misapplication (Francis, Taylor, Hodgen, Tereshchenko and Archer, 2018; Education Endowment Foundation, 2023).

As mentioned earlier, terms such as 'differentiation,' 'differentiated instruction,' and 'differentiated teaching' are often used interchangeably. Similarly, within the educational framework in England, 'adaptive teaching' functions in a related way to support all students, as reflected in its integration into both the ITTECF and Ofsted assessments. The definition associated with 'adaptive teaching,' which entails establishing consistent, ambitious goals for all students while offering personalised support, acknowledges that students are likely to learn at different rates and require varying levels of assistance. However, a key operational difference is that adaptive teaching focuses on whole-class adjustments and scaffolding within the same lesson goals, whereas differentiation frequently targets individual students or small groups with varied objectives and tasks. Adaptive teaching benefits G&T children by enabling them to master the same lesson objectives as their peers, rather than working on entirely different topics. This approach ensures they remain challenged and engaged through tailored support, while staying connected to the whole-class learning experience (Francis *et al*., 2018; DfE, 2019; Roiha and Polso, 2021; NACE, 2023; Education Endowment Foundation, 2023; Alston, 2024). Given the prevalent use of 'adaptive teaching' within the educational framework in England, particularly as reflected in the ITTECF and Ofsted assessments, and the established

prominence of 'differentiation' in the field of gifted education, I will use 'differentiation' as an overarching term in this research. This acknowledges that adaptive teaching, as a pedagogical approach that adjusts instruction with its focus on whole-class adjustments and scaffolding to meet shared learning goals, can be understood as a specific, contemporary application of the r concept of differentiation. I will, however, remain acutely aware of the operational differences between these terms throughout this research, particularly in how they manifest in practice for G&T children.

In general education, differentiation is one of the core pedagogies that nurtures the educational needs and differences of all students, thereby contributing to a more inclusive school system. However, a growing body of literature reports that teachers find implementing differentiation extremely challenging (Tomlinson *et al*., 2003; Weber, Johnson and Tripp, 2013; Rubenstein, Gilson, Bruce-Davis and Gubbins, 2015). Among the most typical challenges voiced by teachers are large class sizes, time constraints, impractical physical environments, lack of materials, inadequate knowledge of effective differentiation methods, scarcity of resources, insufficient collaborative planning time, and lack of administrative support as well as a lack of sufficient subject matter knowledge. To address this issue, it is crucial to strengthen ITE and in-service teacher education. These programmes should prioritise equipping educators with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively implement differentiation strategies and cater to the diverse needs of students (Smets, 2017; Roiha and Polso, 2021; Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2023). Nevertheless, it is essential to note that simply acquiring the skills and knowledge mentioned earlier is not enough. There must be adequate administrative support in place, and leaders should offer continuous assistance within the school district or building to promote the use of differentiated strategies for G&T children by teachers (VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh, 2005).

3.2.2 Acceleration

Acceleration involves advancing students through their educational journey at a pace or age that exceeds the typical expectations. It is one form of intervention used for G&T children

(Siegle, Wilson and Little, 2013). While the term 'acceleration' may imply a rushed process, students are simply placed within the existing curriculum at a level aligned with their abilities. The main aim of educational acceleration is to locate a better-suited educational setting for students who have already displayed exceptional academic performance, surpassing the usual standards observed in typical classroom settings (Lubinski and Benbow, 2000; Gallagher, 2021).

Southern and Jones (2004) identified 18 types of acceleration that include early admission to kindergarten, grade-skipping, and advanced placement. These accelerations can be divided into two main forms: grade-based and subject-based.

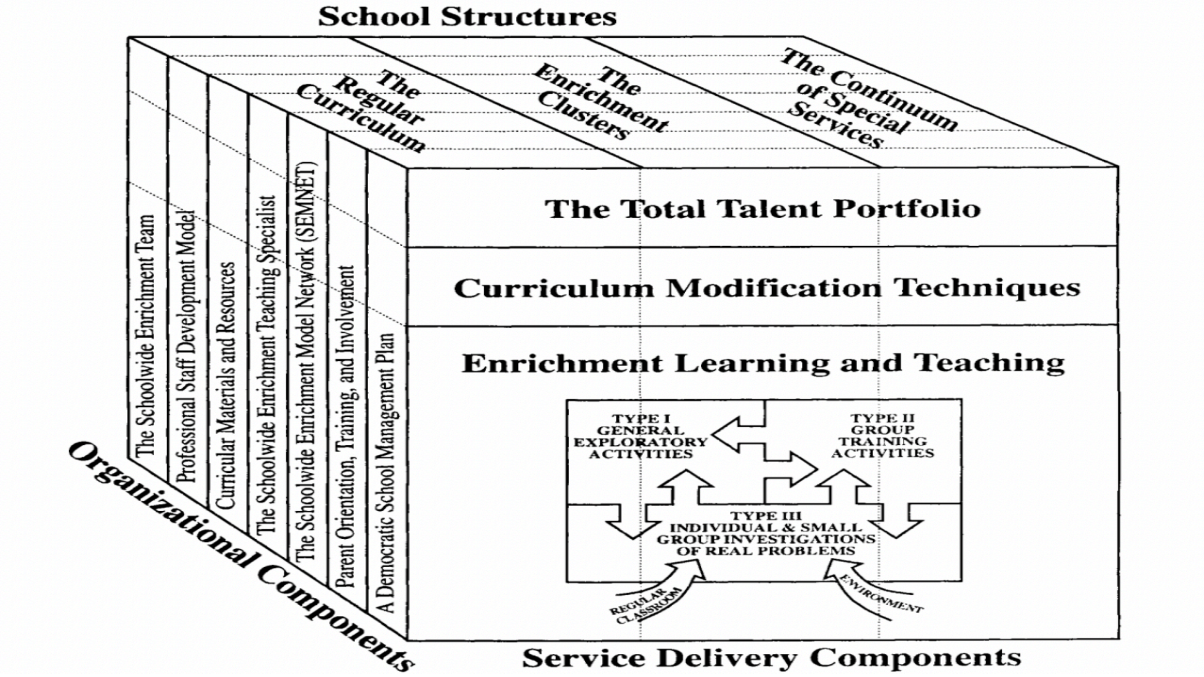
Grade-based acceleration, often referred to as grade-skipping, shortens the total school time for a student. Subject-based acceleration allows students to tackle advanced material earlier in their educational journey. While research supports the academic benefits of various acceleration methods (Rogers, 2004; Steenbergen-Hu and Moon, 2011), grade-based acceleration, which involves separating students from their age peers (e.g., early entrance, grade-skipping), raises concerns among educators and parents of G&T children regarding potential social and emotional impacts (Southern and Jones, 2004; Warne, 2017). While some research findings suggest that grade-based acceleration practices can negatively impact children's social and emotional development (Ingersoll and Cornell, 1995; Hoogeveen, Van Hell and Verhoeven, 2009; Kretschmann, Vock, Luedtke and Gronostaj, 2016), a larger body of research indicates the opposite (Richardson and Benbow, 1990; Gagné and Gagnier, 2004; Siegle, Wilson and Little, 2013). Despite the wealth of research supporting acceleration, there remains some professionals reluctant to fully endorse it for G&T children. However, this does not mean grade-based acceleration is the right fit for all G&T children. Other factors, such as motivation and maturity, must also be considered (Reis and Renzulli, 2004; Rambo and McCoach, 2012; Miravete, 2023).

3.2.3 Enrichment

A further pedagogy in the field of gifted education that can be applied to general education is enrichment. As stated by Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, and Worrell (2011), "Enrichment is a term used to describe a set of programming options that extend and supplement the regular curriculum and often include topics that are not typically covered in the curriculum" (p. 23) In the field of gifted education, enrichment follows two main approaches. One involves tailoring enrichment experiences to children's interests and abilities, while the other focuses on educators choosing suitable content and curriculum. No matter which method is chosen, enrichment programmes stimulate heightened cognitive abilities and creativity within a specific subject area, affording students the opportunity to deeply explore the subject matter (Kim, 2016; Reis, Renzulli and Renzulli, 2021)

A diverse array of enrichment models and programmes, is now available, reflecting a growing global focus on fostering enriched learning experiences. Renzulli and Reis's (1985) 'Enrichment Triad Model' is prominent amongst them, having evolved into the comprehensive 'Schoolwide Enrichment Model' (SEM). The SEM has been embraced by countless schools worldwide and has experienced ongoing expansion on a global level (Reis and Renzulli, 2011). SEM's adaptability stems from its organisational components, which leverage existing personnel and resources within individual school sites (Gibson and Efinger, 2001). The structure of the model and its application are summarised below.

Figure 2: The Schollwide Enrichment Model



(Renzulli and Reis, 2000, p.4)

The SEM aims to achieve three key objectives: 1) nurture talent in every child, 2) offer a wide variety of challenging enrichment experiences for all students, and 3) leverage student responses to these programmes to create personalised advanced learning pathways for G&T children. In this model, the identification system involves creating a talent pool consisting of 15–20% of students demonstrating above-average ability or high potential. This pool is curated through diverse identification methods, including locally normed achievement tests, teacher recommendations, evaluations of students' creativity and commitment to tasks, and alternative pathways like self-nomination or parent nomination (Reis and Renzulli, 2004; Reis and Peters, 2021). The SEM utilises three key tools to achieve its goals:

i. **The Total Talent Portfolio**: These portfolios act as detailed records of each student's distinct abilities, interests, and learning preferences. By grasping these individual characteristics, educators can customise talent development strategies to match each student's strengths and facilitate their personalised progress.

ii. **Customised Curriculum**: To ensure that every student is appropriately challenged and engaged, the SEM employs various curriculum customisation methods. For instance, through curriculum compacting, students who have mastered certain

concepts can skip redundant tasks and explore more enriching activities or accelerated learning opportunities. Curriculum analysis and mapping allow teachers to carefully assess textbooks and design clear learning paths, ensuring comprehensive comprehension for all students.

iii. **Engaging Enrichment**: Recognising that effective learning experiences should be both stimulating and enjoyable, the SEM emphasises engaging enrichment strategies. By utilising a diverse range of approaches, educators can accommodate each student's unique learning style, turning the learning process into an exciting and fulfilling journey. This focus on engagement ensures that all students derive pleasure and motivation from their pursuit of knowledge (Reis and Renzulli, 2003).

To implement these tools effectively, the SEM categorises enrichment activities into three types: Type I, labelled as 'general exploratory activities', exposes students to a variety of experiences and disciplines not typically covered in regular school curriculum. This may include field trips, guest speakers, demonstrations, etc.

'Type II Enrichment' aims to cultivate critical and creative thinking skills, meta-cognitive abilities, methodological processes, and communication skills through specially designed materials in group instruction. This education is typically conducted in both classroom settings and enrichment programmes. Some Type II enrichment activities are unique to each student. These cannot be planned beforehand because they focus on the student's own interests, requiring advanced instruction specific to that chosen topic. For example, if a student develops a strong interest in a subject after Type I Enrichment, they might pursue advanced education by reading in-depth materials and eventually, for those aiming for a more specialised exploration, receive education in advanced research methods through Type III enrichment.

Finally, 'Type III Enrichment' is designed for students with strong interests. It allows them to explore a topic of their choice, combining knowledge and skills to solve real problems. They learn to plan, make decisions, and become self-directed learners. These projects boost their confidence and creativity. Students can tackle these projects individually or in small groups, always based on their own interests (Reis and Renzulli, 2011).

It is important to emphasise that while discussing SEM as an exemplification of enrichment, I mentioned curriculum compacting, not as a separate strategy, but as one that integrates these core approaches. This is because curriculum compacting tailors the curriculum for proficient students, aligning with the principles of differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration (Reis and Renzulli, 2010).

Differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration have been discussed in this chapter as core pedagogical approaches within gifted education; however, their implementation is accompanied by several limitations that warrant critical consideration. Differentiation, for instance, is frequently commended for its inclusive potential; however, in practice, it may prove insufficient if not adequately individualised or if educators lack the requisite pedagogical expertise to implement it effectively (Gaitas and Alves Martins, 2017; Smets, 2017; Roiha and Polso, 2021). Enrichment activities aim to deepen learning and engage interests, but if not well adapted, they can cause fatigue and pressure students to work beyond their capacity. This may limit their willingness to take risks and learn from mistakes, making enrichment more burdensome than beneficial (Shaughnessy and Waggoner, 2015; National Education Association, 2024). Similarly, although acceleration can provide academic advantages, challenges arise regarding which students should be accelerated and how this process is managed. Additionally, concerns about potential social adjustment difficulties contribute to why acceleration remains one of the less favoured practices among educators (Siegle, Wilson and Little, 2013). While each approach holds theoretical promise, their real-world application reveals tensions and trade-offs that require critical attention, particularly within inclusive education settings. This underscores the need for careful contextualisation of pedagogical approaches, as no single method can universally address the needs of gifted and talented children.

The last point I will address here is that, although grouping practices are not explicitly covered under a specific heading in this chapter, they can be applied within general education. One approach is within-class ability grouping, also referred to as homogeneous grouping, where students are grouped according to similar attainment and ability levels within the classroom. This allows all pupils to be challenged appropriately, mitigating the social and emotional disadvantages associated with mixed-ability settings. However, concerns exist for both lower and higher ability groups. Lower groups may develop negative self-perceptions, while higher

groups may develop a fixed mindset, hindering their willingness to embrace challenging tasks. To mitigate these risks, it is essential to maintain high expectations for all groups, ensuring that hard work and progress are rewarded without creating a rigid hierarchy. For instance, assigning lighter workloads to lower-ability groups or reserving subject experts exclusively for top groups should be avoided (Francis *et al*., 2018).

Another practice involves teachers structuring groups heterogeneously within the classroom, allowing G&T children to support their peers. This approach can foster the social and emotional development of G&T children by offering them opportunities for leadership and mentorship among their peers. By guiding others, they can build essential interpersonal skills, confidence, and a sense of responsibility. However, it is equally important to ensure that G&T students are consistently challenged academically, as merely completing tasks for others can lead to frustration or disengagement. When their learning needs are unmet, there is also a risk that they may dominate group dynamics or become passive, reducing the effectiveness of the experience for everyone involved. Thus, recognising the diverse dynamics within each grouping practice, it is essential to consider students' individual characteristics and ensure their educational needs are appropriately addressed (Allan, 1991; Van Tassel-Baska, Landrum and Peterson, 1992; MacIntyre and Ireson, 2002).

Chapter 4: Policy

4.1 Introduction

Recognising the importance of cultivating top students for global competition in a variety of fields, more countries have begun to place a strong emphasis on gifted education. Policymakers, researchers, and a variety of local and national organisations and institutions of higher education work to develop the best education system to meet the needs of this cohort (VanTassel-Baska, 2013). However, as discussed in "Chapter 2," programmes and services for G&T children around the world vary not only in terms of cross-cultural conceptions of the term and subsequent identification procedures but also in terms of the countries' philosophies, political orientations, social structures, and historical contexts. Consequently, many models to educate G&T children have emerged in diverse national education systems, and even within a single education system (Passow, 1981; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

This chapter, divided into three sections, examines these variations in G&T provision in both a national context and worldwide. The first section provides a concise scoping of key developments and the central theoretical issues underlying educational policies for G&T children and their implications for practice across the globe. To achieve this, I will examine the topic under four main subsections: 'Origins,' 'Three key documents,' 'Recent international trends,' and 'Teacher Education.'

In the Origins subsection, I will discuss the contextual factors influencing the development of gifted education as a policy priority. Next, I will examine 'Three key documents' that laid the foundation for policy development after gifted education gained prominence on governmental agendas. These three sources were selected because they are consistent with the principle of providing equal opportunities and access to education for all children, including those who are termed 'gifted and talented.' In the subsection on 'Recent international trends,' I will examine international approaches to gifted education policy, placing particular emphasis on the

philosophical and ideological tensions that inform these policies, as well as the recurring patterns that have emerged across different contexts. These patterns often reflect broader concerns regarding equity, excellence, and individual, social, and economic outcomes, highlighting the complexity in the policy formulation process (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021). Finally, in the 'Teacher Education' subsection, I will evaluate how teacher education is addressed within the processes of formulating gifted education policies. The intention here is to understand the position of England's and Türkiye's gifted education systems in a global context by considering the contextual factors that contributed to the integration of gifted education into policy agendas in leading countries, rather than focusing solely on the scholarly origins of the field.

The remaining two sections of the chapter will offer an overview of the historical and current state of policies and provisions for G&T children in England and Türkiye. The analysis will begin by exploring how both countries have integrated and/or mirrored international trends in their approach to formulating policies concerning gifted education. This will be followed by an exploration of the historical contexts, with the 1990s serving as a key reference point to differentiate between historical and current situations. In 1997, the New Labour government in England marked a significant milestone for gifted education, developing specific policies for this group (Koshy, Smith and Casey, 2018). In Türkiye, the process began with the first Special Education Council organised by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in 1991, which played a crucial role in shaping the current gifted education landscape, replacing previous short-term and discontinuous implementations (Sak, Ayas, Sezerel, Öpengin, Özdemir and Gürbüz, 2015). Thus, the 1990s are considered a critical reference point for assessing the developments in both countries. Following the historical context, the next step will be to examine how the term 'Gifted and Talented' has been conceptualised in policy papers over time in each nation.

After exploring the way countries conceptualise the term, current state of teacher education to meet the needs of G&T children in each country will be presented. Lastly, the current provisions, both country-wide and particular examples for G&T children in these two countries will be addressed. It is important to note that although I have established a historical reference point for both countries in regarding the past and present of gifted education, if there are provisions that emerged before the designated reference point and continue to be implemented, they will also be re-examined in this section.

By exploring these contexts, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the key components and driving factors shaping gifted education policies, from historical foundations to present practices.

4.1.1 Origins

The earliest research focused on or relevant to G&T children was evident in the late 19th and early 20th century such as Galton's *Hereditary Genius* (1891) and Lewis Terman's *Genetic Studies of Genius* (1922). However, its widespread educational implications started with the enthusiasm for the use of mental tests for the investigation of individual differences, and the measurement of intelligence in the second decade of the 20th century. Socio-cultural and socio-political factors of this period necessitated the 'invention' of the notion of 'G&T children' (Borland, 2005).

The United States of America has been the source of many models and theories in the field of gifted education. For instance, the St. Louis Public School that initiated early grade promotions to meet the learning needs of students who had shown outstanding academic achievement as early as the year 1868. This was done to provide students with the opportunity to continue their education in a way that better accommodated their academic accomplishments. In the same era, some schools also implemented acceleration and different forms of enrichment provision for this cohort in this country, but these practices were neither particularly popular nor widespread (Gallagher, 1994, Jolly, 2009; VanTassel-Baska, 2013; 2018). As stressed by Jolly (2009) "America's lack of 'top-level specialists' highlighted during World War II prompted the cultivation of trained and qualified scientists and mathematicians in the United States. Gifted individuals were tapped to provide a pipeline of future scientists and mathematicians, thus linking them to security and the country's survival." (p.38)

Another watershed event in the field of gifted education was the launch of the first artificial Earth satellite, Sputnik, by the Soviet Union in 1957. This launch initiated a 'space race' between USSR and USA and triggered the latter to place more emphasis on academic programmes, especially in science and math, for G&T children to meet the Sputnik challenge (Jolly, 2009). The USA came to accept the notion of recognising and challenging their country's brightest minds. Nationally, more and more schools introduced advanced course offerings, gave high-achieving children the option of shortening coursework for early college entry and began to integrate more science, foreign language, and technology context into their curricula (Davis and Rimm, 2014).

When looking at the historical context of the 1940s and 1950s, it could be argued that USA's engagement in World War II (1941) and the subsequent space race (1957) exposed its students to a global arena in which the success of the country's brightest minds was correlated with national strength and economic competitiveness. In this context, the education of G&T children in the USA became a priority (Haensly, 1999; McClain and Pfeiffer, 2012). That is to say, the social, economic, and political conditions of this period, in addition to the advancement in psychological instruments to identify G&T children created momentum for the recognition of this group (Robinson and Campbell, 2010; Robins, 2010).

While gifted education as a field of study and practice originated in the United States, it has since evolved into a global phenomenon with distinct characteristics and approaches in multiple countries and regions (VanTassel-Baska, 2018).

4.1.2 Three key documents

The education of G&T children holds an increasingly prominent position on the global stage, as there is a growing recognition of the significance of meeting their needs. This recognition has sparked widespread exploration of diverse perspectives and approaches to gifted education worldwide. Although many interest groups and international non-profit organisations provide

reports and guidance to support this group, there is currently no international consensus devoted solely to providing educational services to G&T children and establishing fundamental principles and standards (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021). Here I will discuss three indicative documents that help raise awareness of the importance of meeting the needs of G&T children and serve as a basis for policy development in many countries.

The three documents that I will examine in this section are the Salamanca Statement (1994), Recommendation 1248 (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 1994), and The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (2018). As stressed, these sources were selected for aligning with the principle of equal educational opportunities for all children, including those considered 'gifted and talented.' In this context, they prioritise the perspective of 'access to learning,' providing valuable guidance and support for policymakers in developing education policies for all, including G&T children, either directly or indirectly (UNESCO, 1994; Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 2016; OECD, 2019).

The Salamanca Conference was held in 1994 sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to advocate for education that is accessible to all students. Attendees at the conference included delegates from most national governments, as well as representatives from international organisations and educational stakeholders. Following the conclusion of the conference, a landmark document known as the *Salamanca Statement* was published. In it, key principles, and recommendations for advancing inclusive education on a global scale were outlined (UNESCO, 1994). For G&T children, the *Salamanca Statement* is crucial because it affirms their right to full inclusion in the educational system:

> The guiding principle that informs this Framework is that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups. (UNESCO, 1994, p.6)

By highlighting the importance of inclusive practises, this document has strengthened the commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students. It has been the most important catalyst for policy formulation to meet the needs of diverse children including G&T children in the majority of countries around the world. Since its publication, formal education in schools and colleges has witnessed a growing emphasis on inclusive practices.

(Ainscow, Slee and Best, 2019; Baccassino and Pinnelli, 2023; Lindner, Schwab, Emara and Avramidis, 2023). It is, however, noteworthy that Marsili, Dell'Anna and Pellegrini (2023) have indicated that "Inclusive education concerns all pupils and all human diversities, however, in recent decades international policies and guidelines have mainly been addressed to disability and special educational needs rather than giftedness." (p.3)

The second important document guiding the policy formulation process for G&T children is the *Recommendation 1248*, which was published by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in 1994. By the *Recommendation 1248*, The Parliamentary Assembly (1994) stated:

> Gifted children should be able to benefit from appropriate educational conditions that would allow them to develop fully their abilities, for their own benefit and for the benefit of society as a whole. No country can indeed afford to waste talents, and it would be a waste of human resources not to identify in good time any intellectual or other potentialities. Adequate tools are needed for this purpose. (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe,1994, p.1)

The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers take several key factors into account when developing policies for G&T children. This includes having legislation that recognises the needs of G&T children, a research-informed approach to identifying and meeting their needs, and strategies for identifying G&T children in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) to better address their needs. The recommendation also emphasises the seamless integration of G&T children into the regular education system, promoting flexibility and discretion in administering special provisions to effectively accommodate G&T children's needs (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 1994).

The final influential document that has contributed to the policy formulation process for gifted education is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) was initiated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the year 2000. Since then, it has conducted seven test cycles to measure "15-year-olds' ability to use their reading, mathematics and science knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges" (OECD, 2019). PISA does not specifically assess G&T children, nor does use this terminology. It often faces criticism for reasons such as its narrow focus on easily measurable academic outcomes, neglecting non-academic areas, and its tendence to promote an economic view of education, prioritising job preparedness over broader goals like personal development (The Guardian, 2014; Zhao,

2020). Despite its limitations and common criticisms, PISA does release subgroup data, specifically drawing attention to the performance of its 'Top Performers' . 'Top Performers' here refers to children who are proficient at Levels 5 and 6 on PISA's six-point scale. These data from the subgroup can be connected to the G&T children. The performance of these children can provide policymakers with valuable insights that can contribute to the development of effective strategies and interventions for meeting the G&T children (Stone, 2020).

These documents approach the G&T education from various angles and dimensions. The Salamanca Statement (1994) emphasises the inclusion of all children in education, whereas the Recommendation of the Parliamentary Assembly (1994) focuses specifically on the education of G&T children. PISA, on the other hand, is primarily intended to assess the effectiveness of the education system worldwide. In conclusion, these documents continue to make important contributions from various perspectives to the policy formulation process in meeting the needs of G&T children.

4.1.3 Recent international trends

In the light of the foregoing historical context and key documents, I now examine the international trends within gifted education policy formulation process. This will serve as a foundation for the following sections, in which I will look at gifted education policies and practises in England and Türkiye. My intention is to provide a more nuanced understanding of the global positioning of gifted education, as well as the trends adopted and/or mirrored by England and Türkiye.

Government policy response to gifted education frequently takes place between two opposing factions. Opponents of the idea believe that special education programmes for G&T children are discriminatory since they are designed specifically for a small group of students and violate the principle of equal opportunity. Thus, they are hesitant to adopt policies that would promote gifted education because they are concerned that it will be at the expense of other pupils. In a similar vein to the argument on the necessity of gifted education, as highlighted Parliamentary

Assembly's *Recommendation 1248* (1994), the defendants view these types of programmes as an opportunity to find the most brilliant brains in the country and help them reach their full potential so that they might help to have a positive impact on the nation's economy and social innovation (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 1994; Renzulli, 2012, Heuser, Brian, Wang, Ke, Shahid and Salman, 2017). Regardless of whether a line is drawn between these two opposing views, different countries take various policy actions to address the education of G&T children, which can be classified under three approaches.

The first approach is to have policies that identify, define, and support G&T children with different kinds of provisions. In opposition to egalitarian approaches to gifted education, these policies advance the notion that all individuals come into the world differentiated and that, further, no one is the same. As a result, there are individual differences between learners, and the system needs to be differentiated to enhance each student's learning. There is also a subgroup within this approach that prioritises gifted education as a distinct and individual political issue. Initiatives in mainstream schools, on the other hand, are regarded as inadequate to meet the needs of G&T children and necessitate a more comprehensive set of gifted education-focused measures, such as the opening of dedicated special schools and institutions for G&T children, and the establishment of an entirely dedicated department for policy development and implementation for this cohort.

The second approach is to have policies that promote gifted education in an egalitarian manner without having to name this cohort at all in their policies. Although there are a variety of supportive initiatives for G&T children in countries in this category, they are driven by the emphasis on principal of inclusive education stated by *Salamanca Statement* (1994) to meet the needs of all students, regardless of their unique talents or specific learning needs. The final approach is to integrate gifted education into the category of special education needs (SEN), which means G&T children need special educational provisions. While all these approaches define different perspectives on the education of G&T children, they do not necessarily operate separately from one another, nor do national policies fit neatly into these categories. For example, egalitarian policy approaches that include differentiated instruction may include special provisions for G&T children at the school level, such as pull-out classes. To put it another way, countries do not necessarily pursue just one of the three approaches in its purest form; rather, in practice, they are frequently combined, which leads to the existence of

numerous provisions for the education of G&T children (D'Alessio, 2009; Heuser *et al.*, 2017; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

4.1.4 Teacher Education

With the growing momentum towards inclusive education, teachers are increasingly expected to respond to more diverse student needs. Consequently, there is rising global attention on preparing teachers as a key element in developing inclusive education systems (Waitoller and Artiles, 2013). This focus extends to supporting G&T children, as highlighted by Rutigliano and Quarshie (2021), who state that "Developing the capacity of teachers and school staff to address the needs of gifted students is therefore a core policy lever to promote inclusive education policies and practices" (p. 35).

However, in a study across OECD countries, gifted education is considered part of special educational needs in some countries but treated as a separate area in others, and teaching students with special educational needs was reported by teachers as the area with the highest need for professional development (OECD, 2019; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021). This substantial need for professional development opportunity for teachers might reflect the persistent influence of a deficit-based model in teacher education, which tends to categorise students by specific needs or "labels" and aims to address those discrete difficulties (Arnaiz-Sánchez, De Haro-Rodríguez, Caballero, and Martínez-Abellán, 2023). Such an approach can create an unrealistic expectation that all teachers must possess a comprehensive background in every possible student category immediately following their initial teacher education. Rather than attempting to prepare teachers for every possible category from the outset, a more sustainable and inclusive approach would focus on equipping them with the foundational skills necessary to respond to the diverse needs of all learners. Thus, the question of how teachers should be educated to address the needs of this cohort has emerged as a critical component of the gifted education policy formulation process (Reid and Horváthová, 2016).

Considering global trends in teacher education for gifted education could shed light on how the two countries studied here have evolved their approaches, how they structure their teacher education programmes for gifted education and how teachers are prepared to implement policies and provisions for G&T children. Therefore, this section provides an overview of current international trends in teacher education for G&T children. Separate subsections then evaluate each country's current teacher education programmes in terms of gifted education and highlight the similarities and differences between these two countries.

Depending on which of the three policy approaches to gifted education as mentioned above is adopted by a country, the topic of gifted education in all kinds of in-service and initial teacher education programmes can be mandatory, optional, or absent from policy and legal frameworks (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021). However, the absence of a mandatory requirement for gifted education in teacher education programmes does not mean that such education is not provided: in some countries, teacher education programmes make a deliberate effort to address the needs of G&T learners, regardless of whether it is mandated by the legal framework (Eurydice, 2006).

In this respect, the topic of gifted education in ITE programmes is generally delivered in two main ways: it may be a separate subject or integrated into others. In the first case, teacher candidates may be offered undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to enable them to nurture and ensure the development of G&T children. In the second, gifted education may be included as part of special educational needs (Sękowski and Łubianka, 2013; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

When it comes to in-service teacher education to address the needs of G&T children, it has taken many forms and can be provided by governmental and non-governmental specialised entities or universities (Maker, 1975). The role of non-governmental organisations in the policy formulation process for educators of gifted education may not be limited to being providers of in-service education. In such instances, ministries in collaboration with associations may set standards and specify the knowledge and abilities that teachers need to possess to effectively meet the needs of G&T children (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

4.2 Gifted Education in Türkiye: aligning with international trends

The Turkish education system is centralised, with the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) in charge of developing and implementing national educational policies (Fretwell and Wheeler, 2001). This centralised approach extends to gifted education, with the MoNE in charge of identifying and supporting G&T children. Due to the centralised system of education, the same identification ways and similar provision options have been followed across the country; in this process, school districts and city councils have limited authority (Fretwell and Wheeler, 2001; Tan, 2022). Since the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, education has been used to develop human resources to compete with the world. As a reflection of this, Türkiye has been following and adopting international trends in the field of gifted education to compete with the rest of the world (Sak *et al.*, 2015).

Türkiye's approach to gifted education is characterised by a theoretical perspective that views G&T programmes as an opportunity to develop the human capital of the country and create a pool of highly skilled and talented individuals who can drive innovation and progress across various fields (Sak *et al.*, 2015). Starting with the first law for the education of G&T children: the *Law Regarding Students to be Sent to Foreign Countries* in 1929 and leading up to the publication of the first national G&T children strategy and implementation plan for 2013 to 2017, as well as the Minister of Education's Strategic Plan for 2019 to 2023, the focus has remained on the underlying assumption that gifted education is critical for developing the country's human capital. Despite an opposing view that these practices contradict the principle of equality, this assumption has driven the continued development of gifted education, with policymakers and educators recognising its importance as a means of developing a highly skilled and talented workforce capable of driving progress and innovation in a variety of fields (MoNE, 2013; MoNE, 2019; Bildiren and Çitil, 2022).

Based on this theoretical stance, Türkiye has taken several policy actions to support G&T children, including implementing policies to identify, define, and support G&T children, establishing a dedicated department for policy development and implementation in gifted

education, and publishing national gifted education strategy plans. However, the general trend in policy actions has been to provide education for G&T children within their school environment and supporting them with both in-school and out-of-school provisions, rather than isolating them from their peers (MoNE, 2019). When considering Türkiye's characteristic features alongside the previously mentioned international trends in the field of gifted education, it can be said that Türkiye is amongst those countries that have implemented policies and initiatives to identify, define, and provide support to G&T children through various measures. Based on this characteristic of the country, I will examine the policy that has specifically targeted G&T children in the following sections.

4.2.1 Gifted Education policy in Türkiye pre-1990

The history of gifted education in Türkiye shows that a range of policies and provisions have been implemented for G&T children since the founding of the Republic in 1923. Some of these policies have continued over time and have had an impact on the current state of gifted education, while others, particularly those implemented before the 1990s have been terminated for various reasons (MoNE, 1991). Therefore, the current education model for G&T children in Türkiye has been primarily shaped by the laws and practices enacted after the 1990s. By using 1990 as a reference point, this section examines the policies concerning the education of G&T children in Türkiye prior to that timeframe and their potential influence on present-day practices, if any.

The first law I previously mentioned in the field of gifted education is the *Law Regarding Students to be Sent to Foreign Countries*, enacted in 1929. It aimed to develop human capital in specific areas to support the industrialisation of the country (Sak *et al.*, 2015). Under this law, a government-sponsored study-abroad programme was launched to support high school graduates and graduates from various branches of higher education to study at the world's leading education and research institutions in foreign countries. When this law was first

published, the third article defined the selection criteria for this programme as being able to be superior to peers in terms of intelligence and character (Bildiren and Çitil, 2022).

As mentioned in section '2.2 Defining the Term', the enactment of this policy coincided with the formative years of the field of gifted education. This was a time when the field was beginning to establish itself, following the development of mental measurement tests by Alfred Binet and later expanded by Lewis Terman in the early 20th century.

Given this historical context, it is perhaps not surprising that the original law, published in 1929, defined eligibility for the programme in terms that reflect the scientific and social thinking of the time, namely, the idea of being "superior to peers in terms of intelligence and character." However, this phrasing warrants critical scrutiny. The language used echoes the rhetoric of early intelligence testing and carries implicit assumptions about innate superiority, which were often intertwined with the eugenics movement prevalent in that era. Therefore, while the law marks an early institutional recognition of the needs of G&T children, it also reflects the limitations and biases of its time.

Over the decades since its enactment, the law has undergone a number of revisions, such as the removal of mentioned articles and the narrowing of the scope of support for only Master's and Doctorate degrees. Although currently this programme does not specifically target G&T children, it continues to contribute to the development of the field by supporting students in specialising in gifted education at leading universities worldwide (Sak *et al.*, 2015).

The second legal regulation related to the education of G&T children occurred in 1948 with the enactment of the *Delivery of Îdil Biret and Suna Kan to Music Collection of Foreign Countries Law*. This law provided support for Îdil Biret and Suna Kan, who demonstrated extraordinary performance in the field of music, enabling them to study abroad. (Official Gazette, 1948). Then, this law was replaced with the *Law on the Raising Children Displaying Extraordinary Ability in Fine Arts* in 1956. Along with the enactment of this law, the scope of ability areas covered by the previous was extended to support students showing extraordinary performance in any branch of fine arts inside and outside of the country (Official Gazette, 1956). Thus, without abandoning the approach of meeting the needs of G&T children by providing support for them studying abroad, steps have been taken to support these children in the country as well. In 1976, due to challenges faced whilst implementing this law, *Special*

Statute Regulation entered into force to enable children showing extraordinary performance in the field of music to be educated in the State Conservatories. After completing their education in the State Conservatories, these children were supported with various scholarship programmes to study abroad. Although this law was enacted to support gifted education and many students benefited from it until 1998, it is no longer applicable today and has been replaced by new policies and practices. (MoNE, 2013).

In 1951, *the Primary Education and Education Law*, which is of great importance in the field of special education, came into force in Türkiye. By this law, the Ministry of National Education (MoNE) has undertaken the responsibility of meeting the needs of children with special education needs and disabilities which was previously the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Social Assistance (MoHSA). The 12th article of this law stated that (Official Gazette, 1961:13) "Children who are mentally, physically, spiritually, and socially disabled are provided with special education and training in case they are in the age of compulsory primary education." (p. 358) Although G&T children were not included in the scope of this law, it paved the way for the development of the gifted education policy on a legal basis within the overall education policy. With MoNE becoming a main provider of special education provision, extensive changes in special education policy and provision have been observed (Omeroglu, Sarikaya, Dalioglu, Cakmak, Karatas, Bulut, Sahin, Sabanci, Kukul, Dogan and Basit, 2017).

In this context, Law No. 222 issued in 1962, the *Regulation on Children in Need of* Special *Education* was another important development providing a legal basis for gifted education. The 4th and 13th articles of regulation specifically focused on G&T children and allowed for the establishment of special schools and classrooms for them (Official Gazette, 1962). After this law, two significant developments took place. The first one was the allocation of 8-year-old students who scored 120 and above on intelligence tests into special classrooms in pilot primary schools in Ankara, Istanbul, Bursa and Eskisehir. The second was the establishment of the first Science High School in Ankara, which was created to educate G&T children who showed outstanding achievement in mathematics and science.

The IQ-based approach to allocating students to different classes within selected primary schools was terminated by MoNE in 1968 without an official statement clarifying the reasons behind its discontinuation. However, some argue that it was due to concerns that these measures violated the principle of educational equality (Sak *et al.*, 2015). In contrast to the short-lived

journey of this provision in the history of gifted education in Türkiye, the number of Science and High Schools rapidly increased from their inception, leading to their widespread establishment across the country (Güçyeter, Kanlı, Özyaprak and Leana-Taşcılar, 2017).

Between the establishment of the first Science High School and the beginning of the 1990s in Türkiye, no notable changes were observed in the field of gifted education. Significant developments that have shaped the current landscape of gifted education have occurred since then. These developments will be explored in more detail in the next section.

4.2.2 Gifted Education in Türkiye-1990 onwards

As previously discussed, there have been many developments in the field of gifted education in Türkiye since the 1990s that have shaped the current education system for this cohort. One significant development was the first Special Education Council, organised by the MoNE in 1991. During this, a wide range of decisions related to the education of students in need of special education, including G&T children, were made. For the first time in the history of gifted education in Türkiye, G&T children were defined as those identified by experts as performing at a higher level than their peers in terms of general or special abilities.

Another important development occurred in 1995, when the first Science and Art Centre (SAC) was established in Türkiye, which is now considered the key component of the current education system for this cohort. The establishment of SAC in 1996 has been seen as a cornerstone in the education of G&T children in Türkiye, followed by other initiatives to develop G&T provision. In this regard, in 2002, for the first time in Türkiye, in Istanbul University Hasan Ali Yücel Education Faculty, the 'Teaching of Gifted Children' undergraduate programme was opened to educate teachers. In the same year, a collaborative project was launched by MoNE and Istanbul University at Beyazit Ford Otosan Primary School (Çitil, 2018; Omeroglu *et al*., 2007). Kanlı and Özyaprak (2015) who were a member of the team to carry out this project have stressed:

> The school offered special education for the gifted based on the bilateral agreement between the Turkish Ministry of Education and the University of Istanbul and the protocol aimed to develop a culture-specific differentiated programme to meet the needs of gifted learners. The Istanbul University team applied and monitored the educational programmes in this school via the *Gifted Education Project* they developed and proposed. This project has been carried on between the years 2002-2012. According to this Project, 24 gifted learners were selected for school every year (age 6-7) through group and individual intelligence tests, and they received an education with their average learner peers. (p.4)

Between 2002 and 2012, it was the only state primary school in Türkiye that provided education for G&T children. In 2012, Türkiye implemented a new system of twelve years of compulsory education, divided into 4+4+4 schooling. The project at Beyazıt Ford Otosan Primary School was terminated for several reasons, including difficulties adapting the school to the new education system and dissatisfaction among the project's stakeholders. Following the closure of this school, no new state schools have been opened specifically catering to G&T children (Küçükoğlu, 2014).

The rapid changes led in the field of gifted education in Türkiye since the beginning of the 1990s were followed by the publication of the first G&T children strategy and implementation plan covering the years 2013 and 2017 by the MoNE. The strengths and weaknesses of the gifted education policy and provisions developed in Türkiye until the publication of this strategic plan, along with its potential and the dangers that may be encountered in the future if these practices were continued were analysed in detail. The strategic plan stressed the importance of meeting the needs of G&T children in terms of political, sociologic, psychological, scientific, and technological and recommended educating them according to their interests, abilities, and potentials by developing multiple methods including differentiation, acceleration, and enrichment. The strategic plan then listed the objectives that were planned to be achieved in the future under three main headings:

1. Strategic objectives and targets related to education models
2. Strategic objectives and targets related to human resources
3. Strategic objectives and targets related to generalisability and sustainability

The strategic plan also emphasises the overarching goal of educating G&T children within mainstream education, ensuring they are not separated from their peers, while providing support for their participation in out-of-school programmes such as SAC. In this regard, the

strategic plan outlined the steps to be followed to provide effective provisions for G&T children in Türkiye (MoNE, 2012).

This strategic plan, published by MoNE for the first time in the history of G&T education, was highly successful in raising awareness about this cohort in society. As a result, gifted education became a topic of public discussion, on national television channels and in newspapers. Following this growing awareness, a research committee was established in the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TGNA) regarding G&T children, to identify problems related to their education and ensure their effective employment to contribute to the country's development. It also examined the legal frameworks and educational practices related to G&T children in Türkiye and other countries such as England, the U.S.A. and Israel. Additionally, a subcommittee was formed to conduct a study to examine how education systems are designed to meet the needs of G&T children and to identify policy approaches and initiatives that promote the education of this cohort in Germany, South Korea, and New Zealand. Then, because of these investigations, a detailed report was published. In the relevant part of this report concerning gifted education around the world, it was stressed that TGNA (2012):

> Each country supports these children for various purposes. While some countries (such as Russia, South Korea and Israel) approach the issue in terms of national strategy, some countries (such as Australia, New Zealand and Germany) consider the issue from various aspects such as children's rights, equality in education, and the right to education as well as the strategic importance of the issue. (pp.326)

Furthermore, the TGNA (2012) recommended supporting students through various scholarship programmes to pursue Master's and Doctorate Degrees at the world's leading educational and research institutions specialising in gifted education. In this context, it has been observed, under the scope of the *Law on Students to be Sent to Foreign Countries*, which is the first law enacted by the Republic of Türkiye for the education of G&T children, many students were supported (especially in Korea and Russia in 2016) complete their higher education abroad in the field of gifted education (MSPC; 2013; 2014; MoNE, 2015b; 2016b; 2020).

Two years after the publication of the strategic plan and commission report published by MoNE and TGNA, respectively, another important development occurred: the MoNE published a regulation on the *establishment of a Resource Room* (RR) for both G&T children and children identified with special educational needs and disability in 2015 (MoNE, 2015a). In light of the regulation concerning the establishment of Resource Rooms and the specific legal provisions

targeting G&T children mentioned earlier, these changes have collectively shaped the present policy framework for gifted education.

4.2.3 Giftedness and Talent in Türkiye: a conceptualisation of the term

The first official definition of G&T children in Türkiye was made by the Special Education Council in 1991, stating that G&T children are those who are identified by experts in the field as performing at a higher level than their peers in terms of general or special abilities (MoNE, 1991). Prior to this date, IQ-based approaches were dominant in the field of gifted education in Türkiye. Later on, this definition has been expanded and has taken its current form as G&T children are those who are faster learners than their peers, ahead in creativity, art and leadership capacity, possess special abilities, demonstrate high performance, can comprehend abstract thinking, and enjoy acting independently in their interests. In other words, gifted education system in Türkiye not only rewards academic abilities but also recognises and values talents in fields such as music, visual arts, and other areas of expertise (MoNE, 2021a).

4.2.4 Teacher Education in Gifted Education in Türkiye

Türkiye, via with explicit policies and provisions for G&T children, mandates the inclusion of gifted education in ITE programmes. In this regard, all teacher candidates are required to take a course that includes the topic of gifted education, titled 'Special Education and Inclusion.' However, since the 'Special Education and Inclusion' course may not provide sufficient focus on gifted education, some universities offer an optional course specifically dedicated to gifted education for teacher candidates (Tortop and Ersoy, 2015).

To specialise in this field, teacher candidates enrolled in the 'Special Education Teaching' undergraduate programme can choose optional courses related to gifted education (CoHE, 2015; 2018). Alternatively, postgraduate programmes are available at certain universities to specialise in this area (Tortop and Ersoy, 2015).

The requirement to deliver a course on gifted education is not limited to ITE programmes in Türkiye. Both teachers and administrators of SAC, which is a country-wide provision for G&T children, must participate in in-service education organised by MoNE at least once a year based on their specialisation to increase the quality of provision at SAC (MoNE, 2022). Also, teachers working in the resource room, which is another country-wide provision for G&T children, are subject to such a requirement (MoNE, 2016). In addition to the in-service education provided by the Ministry of National Education, there are also some applications provided by non-ministerial organisations to enhance teachers' competencies in the field of gifted education (Tortop, 2014; Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, 2023).

4.2.5 Exemplification of provision

In line with the previously discussed laws and regulations, the objective here is to examine the range of provisions that have emerged within the framework of gifted education in Türkiye and to provide details on how they function.

4.2.5.1 Country-wide provision

This subsection describes the current country-wide provisions and gives specific examples of provision.

4.2.5.1.1 Science and Art Centres (SAC)

The Science and Art Centres were founded by the Department of Special Education, Guidance and Counselling Services in 1995 and have since become widespread in the education system. They are one of the main provisions for G&T children in Türkiye. According to 2021 statistics, there are 225 Science and Art Centres in Türkiye, with a goal to increase this number to 350 by 2022 (MoNE, 2021a).

The purpose of SAC is to provide education for G&T children attending primary and secondary schools based on their interests and abilities. In this respect, SAC is an out-of-school programme that adopts project-based and problem-based learning models to develop G&T children during weekends or after school hours. It is expected to implement the curriculum in SAC in a way that integrates with the programmes of schools, where students are enrolled.

The selection process for the SAC is based on general or specific ability areas. The specific ability areas covered by the selection process are music and visual arts. The selection process begins with the nomination of primary school students from all grades by teachers. These students are then invited to participate in a group ability test, which differs depending on whether they are nominated according to general or specific ability areas. For the students nominated by general ability areas take a group ability test organised by the Guidance and Research Centre. Those who pass the cut-off on the IQ test are qualified for the second stage, which involves an individual assessment. Students who pass the cut-off in the IQ test applied at this stage are entitled to enrol in SAC.

The group ability tests for students who are nominated in specific ability areas are administered by the teachers at the school where the students are enrolled. While students nominated for musical ability are applied to musical aptitude tests, students nominated for visual arts take visual perception tests. Individual evaluations of students who are deemed successful on group ability tests are conducted by SAC. Students who pass this evaluation have the right to enrol in SAC.

Education at SAC begins in the second grade of primary school and continues until the end of secondary school. The education programme of SAC comprises five phases: 1. Orientation; 2. support education including problem-solving; group study, scientific research, critical and creative thinking, effective decision-making, resource management and technology literacy techniques; 3. the discovery of personal skill; 4. the development of specific talents; and 5. project management.

Teachers must have at least three years of teaching experience in MoNE, complete mandatory service or be exempted from mandatory service or have deferred mandatory service to work in SAC. Teachers who meet these conditions can apply if there is a teaching job vacancy at the SAC in the province where they work. After this, teachers who work in SAC are appointed based on a two-step assessment process. The first step starts with completing the *Assessment Criteria Form* by the candidate teacher. By *The Assessment Criteria Form*, candidate teachers are evaluated by a set of criteria such as academic background, achievements, projects they have participated in, English proficiency level and prior publications. There is a score corresponding to each criterion that is stated in this form and candidate teachers are ranked according to the score they have obtained through this evaluation. Then, three teachers with the highest score per vacancy are invited for an interview, in which candidate teachers are evaluated by *Interview Assessment Criteria Form* through the five main criteria 1. communication skills, confidence and ability of persuasion 2. comprehension and sense of proportion 3. open-mindedness to scientific and technological developments 4. competence and 5. up-to-date knowledge, creativity, and willingness. Next, teachers are ranked for the final time, with sixty per cent of the total score coming from the *Assessment Criteria Form* and forty per cent from the *Interview Assessment Criteria Form*. Finally, the teacher with the highest score is appointed to work at SAC (MoNE, 2021a; 2021b; 2021c).

4.2.5.1.2 Science High School

To improve the education of the G&T student at the high school level, the Ford Foundation and MoNE signed a protocol to establish a Science High School in 1961. As a result of this initiative, the first Science High School was opened in Ankara in 1964 to educate children who showed outstanding achievement in mathematics and science. Students were enrolled in these schools based on a set of selection criteria, which aimed to choose the top 1% of high-ability student. The land for the school, its construction, and the equipment used in the laboratories were provided by the Middle East Technical University. Selected teachers to work in these schools were supported to attend a teacher education course at Florida State University in the USA. New York Bronx Science High School was chosen in the USA as a model for the curriculum and operation of this school and a scientific committee examined the way in which it operated. Based on that of the New York Bronx Science High School, a curriculum was developed, and Ankara Science High School was opened in 1962. After four years of its establishment, the Ford Foundation withdrew its support for this project. Although there are now more than 300 Science High Schools in Türkiye, these schools have evolved from being schools that only provide education to G&T students to becoming a school that admits students based on their national exam results (Davaslıgil, 1991; Levent, 2011; Güçyeter *et al*., 2017; Çitil, 2018; Bal, 2020; MoNE, 2018).

4.2.5.1.3 Resource Room (RR)

RR is an out-of-class service providing a personalised education for both students with special education needs and disabilities and G&T children who continue their education in the mainstream with their peers. The aim is to ensure that these groups of students benefit from the education services offered at the highest level. Establishing an RR for G&T students and students identified with special educational needs and disabilities has become mandatory at all school levels. Like the placement of students for SAC, the Guidance and Research Centre is

responsible for identifying these groups of students for the placement in RR. The weekly course hours that the students receive in RR cannot exceed 40% of the total teaching hours per week, which can be delivered by any teacher working within the schools (MoNE, 2015a).

4.2.5.1.4 Grade-skipping

Another country-wide provision for G&T children in Türkiye is grade-skipping. First, second and third-grade students who demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills in grammar, mathematics, and sciences are eligible to take the class promotion exam. The process begins with the petition containing the request for a grade upgrade received from the student's parents. The classroom teacher then suggests to the school administration that the student be promoted, taking the parent's request into account. Students who are successful in the exam are allowed to skip one class only (Official Gazette, 2014).

4.2.5.1.5 Children's University

Children's University offers after-school and summer school programmes. According to the *Report on Children's Universities in EUROPE and TURKEY*, there are more than 20 Children's Universities in Türkiye, and this number is increasing (İstanbul Aydın Children's University, 2015). The common mission of Children's University is to promote diversity and equality in education by supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In this regard, while some Children's Universities are designed to target only G&T children, others provide education for all children including the G&T cohort. Although the curriculum implemented within Children's Universities in Türkiye differs, the general approach is to enable children to have the opportunity to learn in a rich range of contexts through a broad range of clubs and a variety of field trips (Üsküplü, 2019).

4.2.5.2 Some distinctive feature of practice

In this section, I will introduce two prominent provisions that, while not implemented country-wide, stand out in the field of gifted education in Türkiye.

4.2.5.2.1 Turkish Education Foundation İnanç Türkeş Private High School

This is a selective school established in 1993 with the contribution of the İnanç Foundation to educate G&T children. This school applied a multistep identification process that starts with the knowledge-based exam. Next, successful applicants are invited to take intelligence tests followed by an observation camp for the 120 students with the highest scores on this IQ test. During the observation camp, candidate students are evaluated in a variety of academic disciplines through projects and tests. In addition to these factors, the candidates' adaptation to boarding school, teamwork propensity, and level of motivation are also considered to find the most suitable candidates for enrolment in this school. Another special regulation related to school admission was the school population: fifty per cent of the school population must be girls and fifty per cent must be boys. This aims to support underrepresented G&T girls. In 2002, due to economic problems, this school was transferred to the Turkish Education Foundation, and it was named a Turkish Education Foundation İnanç Türkeş Private High School. Although these days there have been some changes in school admissions procedures, this school has continued to provide a personalised education for G&T students at the secondary school level based on their intelligence test performance (Kanlı and Özyaprak, 2016; Omeroglu, Sarikaya, Dalioglu, Cakmak, Karatas, Bulut, Sahin, Sabanci, Kukul, Dogan and Basit, 2017; Türk Eğitim Vakfı İnanç Türkeş Özel Lisesi, 2022).

4.2.5.2.2 Education Programme for Talented Students (EPTS)

Anadolu University established the Education Programme for Talented Students (EPTS) in 2007. Sak (2011) has stressed that "The EPTS is a university-based, after-school programme for talented students in elementary and secondary schools. It is a six-component programme model, including identification, curriculum, instruction, assessment, programme organisation, and teacher training models." (p.214) EPTS provides mathematics and science education for G&T children. The curriculum implemented during EPTS was developed based on Sternberg's *theory of successful intelligence* and along with research on creativity and problem-solving. Acceleration and enrichment are at the heart of the curriculum implemented in EPTS, which consists of analytical ability, creative ability, practical ability, and knowledge components. it can be said that, in terms of the originality and comprehensiveness of its six-core component and subcomponents, the EPTS programme developed for G&T children by Anadolu University is one of the best practices for G&T children in Türkiye. In this context, it is also observed that some private schools open special classes for G&T children and implement the EPTS programme by adapting it within their overall curriculum (Sak, 2011; Sak *et al.*, 2015).

4.3 Gifted Education in England: aligning with international trends

The English education system operates through a decentralised structure that differs from Türkiye's more centralised model. At the national level, the Department for Education (DfE) sets overall policies and standards. Local Education Authorities (LEAs) then implement these policies at a regional level, overseeing state-funded schools. However, a growing number of schools, known as academies, operate independently of LEAs. These schools often form Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) to collaborate and share resources. While both state-funded schools and academies are publicly funded, academies have greater autonomy in decision-making, such

as curriculum, staffing, and finances. The day-to-day running of all schools, whether state-funded or academies, is overseen by a governing board composed of community members, parents, and school staff. This system provides education for all students, including those who are gifted and talented, meaning that the gifted education provision in English schools is regulated nationally but may be subject to regional or local variations (Eyre and Geake, 2002; West and Wolfe, 2018; Male, 2024).

Rising standards for educational excellence and a commitment to equity have been the focus of education reforms in England (Eyre, 2009). As previously discussed, two opposing factions play a role in developing policy for G&T children. In England, gifted education polices have been formulated on the arguments from both views; economic argument to reveal and nature potential to make the country economically competitive on a global level and commitment to equality to address the social and economic barriers that can limit academic success (Ainscow, 2010; Koshy *et al*., 2018).

While policies grounded in an egalitarian approach can sometimes leave gifted and talented students overlooked in policy documents, at other times, specific initiatives targeting G&T students gain prominence. This reflects a fundamental tension in educational policy in England: balancing the commitment to providing all students with equal access to opportunities and resources with the recognition that gifted and talented students may require specialised support to address their needs (Campbell, Muijs, Neelands, Robinson, Eyre and Hewston, 2007).

Taking England's policy approach to gifted education into account, the following section will examine both types of policies: those that directly target G&T children and those that affect or work in tandem with gifted education to gain a more comprehensive insight into the current state of gifted education in this country. As in the case of Türkiye, the 1990s will be used as a reference point to differentiate between the historical and present landscape of gifted education in England. This period was particularly significant as it marked the emergence of wider 'inclusive practice' in English schools, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

4.3.1 Gifted Education policy in England pre-1990

This section highlights the policies that were in place before 1997 and are still in effect today. In 1997 G&T children were recognised as a distinct cohort in the national policy framework (DfEE, 1997). Prior to this date, there were policy initiatives that promoted gifted education without explicitly naming this cohort at all. In 1944, the *Education Act* enabled the establishment of academically selective 'Grammar schools' in England. These schools were designed to cater to academically gifted children, providing them with advanced education and preparing them for higher education and professional careers. However, over time, these schools were criticised for their elitist nature, as they often drew students from privileged backgrounds and perpetuated social inequalities. Despite this, there are still some grammar schools in existence, and they have been criticised for admitting an extremely low percentage of children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds (Casey and Koshy, 2013; Cribb, Sibieta and Vignoles, 2013; Boettger and Reid, 2015).

Subsequently, the 1988 Education Reform Act, which is widely accepted as the most influential piece of government legislation in the context of education in England, established the framework of a market-driven education system, where schools are encouraged to compete not only for students but also for funding. This is made possible by allowing parents to specify which school they prefer their child to attend. Since the 1988 *Education Reform Act*, parental choice has been adopted within the education system in England, with an explicit intention to improve standards through marketisation. This assumes that, if families have more options for school choice, there is a greater possibility of matching students with schools according to personal interest and pedagogical needs (Gibbons, Machin and Silva, 2006). In this manner, in England, DfE has encouraged schools to specialise in particular curriculum areas such as music, art, drama and sport. Also, in the case of having specialism mentioned in a prescribed subject, ten percent of a school's intake may be chosen based on aptitude (West, Pennell and Noden, 1998). Some limitations were later introduced to this practice, which will be discussed in the following section.

The National Curriculum, established by the *1988 Education Reform Act*, was one of the initiatives that followed the introduction of market mechanisms into the education system. Prior to this, there was an autonomous approach to the curriculum, and participation in national exams was optional. However, with the introduction of the National Curriculum, a standardised framework of core and foundation subjects was established for the first time for state schools (Ball and Bowe, 1992). In addition to the implementation of the National Curriculum, a comprehensive mechanism has been established to effectively monitor and evaluate students' progress through the four 'Key Stages' of their education by the introduction of statutory requirements. Although the National Curriculum and key stage assessment system have undergone several revisions, they continue to be an important component of the education system within the policy context in England (Roberts, 2022). The initiatives that began with the *1988 Education Act* have been followed by others, such as the introduction of both performance tables and value-added systems, a performance-based payment system in England. The latter remains one of the most controversial education policies today, particularly regarding its educational pros and cons (Machin and Vignoles, 2006: Tomlinson, 2017).

In this section, I provided information about the 1944 School Act and especially the 1988 Education Reform Act and its resulting changes which have informed how post-1994 and current provision for G&T children has developed. Both did not specifically target G&T children. However, due to a commitment to incorporating gifted education within the general school system in England, they have provided a stable foundation for addressing how gifted education is operated in the English education system, regardless of whether the policy framework explicitly identifies G&T children as a distinct cohort or not.

4.3.2 Gifted Education policy in England-1990 onwards

The first recorded official commitment to providing effective provision for G&T children took place in 1997 when the New Labour government came to power. The government's intention was emphasised in the White Paper: *Excellence in Schools* (DfEE, 1997): "We plan to develop

a strategy for the early identification and support of particularly able and talented children that links several strands, including accelerated learning, specialist schools, and partnerships with independent schools." (p. 39) From this point onward, G&T children became a visible cohort, and their needs began to be considered in government documents.

Two years after the first official declaration with respect to G&T children, the *Excellence in Cities* (EiC) programme was launched (1999). It initially aimed to raise standards in disadvantaged urban secondary schools and promote social inclusion in England. The programme was then extended geographically to cover primary schools. EiC organisation was developed in partnership with Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and schools within this region and funding was allocated between them (Eyre and Geake, 2002; Fletcher-Campbell and Teeman, 2004; Kendall, 2005).

The EiC programme had three core strands that affect all schools: "Learning Mentors, to help students overcome educational or behavioural problems; Learning Support Units, to provide short-term teaching and support programmes for difficult pupils; and a Gifted and Talented programme, to provide extra support for 5–10% of pupils in each school." (Machin, McNally and Meghir, 2004, p.398) The government then continued to progressively introduce a national strategy to improve the quality of gifted education in England. In the White Paper: *Schools: Achieving Success,* the government outlined the gifted education policy as follows:

- Support the most gifted and talented in the country and in each school, particularly in disadvantaged areas.
- Build on pupils' particular strengths and tackle any weaknesses, making sure they too receive a broad and balanced education.
- Combine in-school learning with complementary opportunities out-of-school hours.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to progress in line with their abilities, rather than their age and, where possible, achieve mastery, rather than superficial coverage of all subjects.
- Blend increased pace, depth and breadth in varying proportions according to the ability and needs of pupils. We want teachers to consider express sets, fast-tracking and more early entry to GCSE and advanced qualifications. (DfES, 2001, p.21)

The measures taken in the field of gifted education were followed by the existing government's stated intention to introduce further initiatives to support G&T children. These initiatives included both the establishment of an academy for G&T children and the organisation of all LEAs to provide full-time education for all pupils (DfES, 2001). Aligned to these commitments, a set of actions was taken. The EiC programme was expanded in 2003 to include all primary and secondary schools in all LEAs in England. Along with the evaluation of EiC,

from a programme focused only on disadvantaged areas to an education policy that started to be implemented throughout the country, G&T coordinators were appointed at both local authority and school levels to ensure better implementation of the policy (Casey and Koshy, 2013).

Another development was the establishment of the National Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY), based at the University of Warwick to provide support for 5% of pupils aged between 11 and 19 from all schools in 2002 (Ball, 2008). It is partner was the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), a charity founded in 1968 which "… had offered out-of-school 'enrichment' activities to mainly middle-class children since that time" (Tomlinson, 2008, p.66). The role of NAGTY was to develop, implement, adopt and disseminate best practices to support G&T children, as well as to provide support for parents and educators as national coordinators of the gifted education programme. In this regard, in partnership with selected universities, the Academy provided a wide range of enrichment activities for G&T children such as summer schools, online discussion forums, and subject workshops. The result of the cognitive test was not the only criterion for selecting students to attend NAGTY programmes. Multiple pieces of evidence, including nominations from educators, parents, and peers, transcripts, and samples of individual work or other achievements, were considered for this process. This approach aimed to align the proposed course content with the applicants' interests and abilities (Lindsay, Muijs, Hartas and Phillips, 2002; Hartas, Lindsay and Muijs, 2008). However, the requirement to identify 5-10% of the school population for support prompted teachers to rely on measurable methods, such as IQ testing or academic achievement assessments, rather than directing their attention to various talent areas (Koshy, and Pinheiro-Torres, 2013). The formation of gifted education policy in England is rooted in the New Labour government's concern to combine excellence with equity (Eyre, 2009; Campbell *et al*., 2007).

In 2007, NAGTY was closed, and the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) became the national coordinator of the gifted education programme. In the same year, the Gifted and Talented National Strategy was established, and a designated team was formed to educate teachers through online professional development programmes. Along with the transition of NAGTY's responsibilities to CfBT, three mechanisms were developed to assist in the implementation of the policy. These are:

- The Development of *Quality Standards* aimed at effective self-evaluation for teachers, schools and LAs to determine the nature and effectiveness of provision for G&T children by 14 criteria within the 5 personalised education components.
- The establishment of a *National register* of G&T students to track and monitor their progress. Thereby, it was expected from schools to identify 5% to 10% of top-ability students aged between 4 and 19 to provide different teaching and learning programmes to meet the needs of this selected group.
- The establishment of *Excellence Hubs* in partnership with HE institutions to provide out-of-school masterclasses, summer schools and other provisions (DfES, 2001; Eyre, 2003; Robinson and Campbell, 2010 Casey and Koshy, 2013; Dimitriadis, 2016).

A parliamentary select committee meeting with the key stakeholders was held to review progress in the field of gifted education in 2010. Despite the acknowledging the positive impact of some effective practices on G&T children, the focus was on the inconsistency of policy (House of Commons, 2010). By the time a Coalition government was elected in 2010, the field of gifted education in England had undergone a radical change: "Moving from a highly centralised policy through national agencies such as NAGTY and CfBT, the brokering of provision, and accountability for ensuring appropriate identification and provision for individual pupils, became much more school-based with regional support" (Robinson and Campbell, 2010, p.70). In this respect, the National Strategy Team was disbanded, the funding to provide service for G&T children via Excellence Hub, school and LAs was cut or subsumed, and G&T coordinators were discharged (Eyre, 2009).

Following the decentralisation of the service for G&T children in England, gifted education was integrated into general education policy. Emphasis was placed on schools that it was expected from them to be the provider of education for all including the G&T children (Eyre, 2009). The school-led approach to the education of G&T children resulted in a variety of provisions that differed from one school to another. Since the responsibility for educating G&T students was entirely entrusted to schools, gifted education found a place within governments' education policy agendas in two ways. The first one was related to 'Pupil Premium Funding.' It was additional funding introduced in 2011 to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils (identified as those in receipt of free school meals) by giving a sum of money to schools each year. Although this funding did not directly target G&T children, those from disadvantaged backgrounds can still benefit from it (Koshy, Smith and Casey, 2018).

The second aspect pertains to the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), a non-ministerial department responsible for inspecting the quality of educational provision across all state schools, some independent schools, academies, and other educational institutions in England. Ofsted employs a four-point scale to evaluate schools (grade 1: outstanding, grade 2: good, grade 3: requires improvement, grade 4: inadequate) (Ofsted, 2019). It is worth noting that Ofsted's one-word ratings for the quality of teaching in schools are criticised for not always fully capturing the quality of teaching and care that a school provides to children (UK Parliament, 2023). Since 2014, the scope of inspection by Ofsted has included the quality of provision for G&T children. Since the decentralisation of services for G&T children, Ofsted published two reports (2013 and 2015). Based on the 2009 PISA assessment findings, Ofsted's first published report highlighted the importance of students attaining the highest levels of proficiency in this assessment, identifying it as one of the primary challenges that required attention in the field of gifted education in England. Ofsted stated (2013)"We need to make sure that our most able students do as well academically as those of our main economic competitors." (p.5) It was also stressed that many of the 'more able' students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds did not make the progress that they should have. Thus, schools are expected to place greater emphasis on supporting these students and to improve their curricula to challenge more able learners. This includes enhancing the transition arrangements from primary to secondary school, collaborating with families to inform them about the application process for the most prestigious universities, and highlighting the opportunities available to them in higher education (Ofsted 2013; 2015).

In terms of Pupil Premium funding, Ofsted (2013; 2015) stressed that most schools used these resources for underachieving and low-attaining children rather than for 'more able children' from disadvantaged backgrounds. Ofsted does not have any advice to schools to prioritise 'more able' or 'most able' students from disadvantaged backgrounds for pupil premium funds, although DfE has emphasised (2022) that "These pupils should receive just as much focus in your use of pupil premium as less academically able pupils." (pp.9)

Another notable development following the decentralisation of services for G&T children was related to the policy encouraging schools to specialise in particular curriculum areas such as music, art, drama, and sport. Initially, this policy enabled schools to admit up to 10 percent of their student intake based on aptitude in these specific disciplines. However, a later amendment restricted this selection practice to only those schools that had been consistently applying

aptitude-based admissions since the 2007/08 academic year (DfE, 2021). Koshy and Pinheiro-Torres (2012), in their analysis of the period during which gifted education became a visible focus in government policy agendas, argue that, although the policy contributed to greater recognition of diverse, domain-specific abilities, its rushed, top-down implementation, combined with insufficient opportunities for professional development, substantially limited its overall effectiveness. When these three factors are considered together, the decentralisation of services for G&T children, the concerns raised by Koshy and Pinheiro-Torres, and the restrictions on aptitude-based selection, it suggests that children whose abilities lie in non-academic domains may be overlooked, thereby undermining the original goal of supporting and nurturing a broader spectrum of talents within the education system.

4.3.3 Giftedness and Talent in England: a conceptualisation of the term

During the time when gifted education was included in the government agenda through the EiC programme, G&T children were defined as those who have developed one or more abilities to a level that exceeds the expectations for their age group, or who have the potential to develop such abilities. Furthermore, the definition made a distinction between exceptional ability in academic subjects, such as mathematics and science, which is typically referred to as gifted, and exceptional ability in non-academic areas such as sports and the arts, which is typically referred to as talented. Since the decentralisation of services and the dissolution of the National Strategy Team, instead of 'gifted and talented', the terms: 'most able' or 'more able' have been used by Ofsted and there is no official definition of these terms in England (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft, Long and Danechi, 2020)

According to Ofsted, the terms 'most able' or 'more able' are defined in a similar way to how PISA refers to so-called 'top achievers.' They refer to "the brightest students who begin secondary school in Year 7 and either achieve Level 5 or above in English (reading and writing) and/or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 or demonstrate the potential to achieve Level 5 and above." (Ofsted, 2013, p.7) In other words, Ofsted, uses the terms 'most able' or 'more able'

to describe students who score above the average mark in exams designed to measure students' academic proficiency in subjects like English and Mathematics.

4.3.4 Teacher Education in Gifted Education in England

The Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework (ITTECF) is statutory guidance for all initial teacher education courses in England. The ITTECF specifies the essential education that providers must offer; however, it allows ITE providers flexibility in designing their own curricula provided they ensure that their curricula cover the entire entitlement described in the ITTECF. This means that the specific content and structure of ITE programmes can vary between different providers. The ITTECF does not mandate specific education on gifted education, leading to variations in coverage across ITE programmes. Although the framework does not explicitly focus on gifted education, it indirectly addresses it by emphasising adaptive teaching as a pedagogical approach that adjusts instruction with a focus on whole-class adjustments and scaffolding to meet shared learning goals (for further insight, revisit section '3.2.1 Differentiation') (Mönks and Pflüger, 2005; DfE, 2024).

The absence of a requirement for gifted education in ITE programmes also extends to in-service teacher education. However, in their reports published in 2013 and 2015, Ofsted recommended that schools provide education for teachers at all levels to effectively challenge and support this cohort (Ofsted, 2013; 2015). Through non-governmental organisations such as Potential Plus UK, and other private providers, teachers in England have access to a range of applications and resources designed to enhance their proficiency in gifted education. In addition, individuals seeking to specialise in gifted education can access a variety of postgraduate programmes designed to expand their subject knowledge (Mönks and Pflüger, 2005).

4.3.5 Indicative examples of provision

As previously stated, after the decentralisation of gifted education in England, the existence and implementation of provision for G&T children may vary depending on each school's and local government's policies and resources (Eyre, 2009). Because of this, I will distinguish between general provisions that apply nationwide and specific examples of provisions, with the latter representing variations from school to school and region to region. This contrasts with the equivalent section in Türkiye, which emphasises exceptional instances that are recognised as exemplary implementations.

4.3.5.1 Country-wide provision

This subsection highlights the current country-wide provisions and presents specific examples of their application.

4.3.5.1.1 Grammar schools

A Grammar school is a type of selective school that has a long history in England's education system. As previously noted, public perception of grammar schools as elitist spaces has decreased over time. Nevertheless, according to statistics from 2022, there are still 163 grammar schools operating in England (Long, Danechi and Maisuria, 2022). The distribution of grammar schools is highly unequal: only 35 of the 317 Local Authorities have grammar schools, with around 60% of these schools concentrated in just 11 of them. As previously

mentioned, comprehensive schools may select up to 10% of their intake based on students' aptitude if the school has expertise in a specific area. In contrast to this, grammar schools are allowed to admit students based on an examination of their academic ability, which is usually conducted around the age of 11. It is argued that this feature makes grammar schools one of the schools where academically G&T children can receive education (Gov.UK, 2023). Although grammar schools may provide opportunities for some academically G&T students, their continued existence raises significant concerns about how to fairly support high achievement while ensuring equal access to education. One major issue is that the extensive resources required to prepare children for entrance exams create barriers for those from less advantaged families, further limiting equitable access (Long, Danechi and Maisuria, 2022). Supporting this, a recent BBC analysis found that in approximately one-quarter of England's 160 grammar schools, fewer than 5% of students were eligible for pupil premium funding (Jeffreys and Stephenson, 2023). This suggests that grammar schools may reinforce existing social inequalities by giving more educational advantages to children who are already advantaged. This underscores the need for ongoing critical evaluation of selective schooling within efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable education system.

4.3.5.1.2 Grade-skipping

Grade-skipping is another type of provision for G&T children within the current state of policy. If a child is identified as gifted and talented, their parents may request admission outside of their normal age group. The admissions authority will carefully evaluate each case, taking into consideration the child's academic, social, and emotional development, as well as the perspectives of the parents and the head teacher at the school where the child will be enrolled. Finally, the admission authority will make a decision that is in the best interest of the child (DfE, 2021).

4.3.5.2 Exemplification of provision

In this section, the focus is on examining the range of provisions that have emerged within the framework of gifted education in England, along with a discussion of how these provisions function.

4.3.5.2.1 Out-of-school provision

Out-of-school provision for G&T children in England is delivered in a variety of ways, by supported by various organisations such as universities, private organisations, and Local Authorities. Additionally, schools can collaborate with other schools to offer specialised after-school programmes for these students in different subjects, such as maths, art, design, and technology. Some associations assist schools in better meeting the needs of G&T children by providing education, resources, and guidance such as the Challenge Award of the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) and the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) (Sutton Trust, 2012).

4.3.5.2.2 School-based provision

Current school-based provision primarily focuses on acceleration, adaptive teaching (a pedagogical approach distinct from traditional differentiation due to its emphasis on whole-class adjustments and scaffolding to facilitate shared learning objectives), and enrichment. Additionally, two common grouping strategies support personalised learning pathways: setting, which groups pupils by attainment for specific subjects, and streaming (also known as

'tracking'), which places pupils in fixed groups across most or all subjects. While both aim to tailor instruction to students' attainment levels, they can reinforce socio-economic inequalities, increase racial segregation, reduce acceptance of diversity, and lower the confidence and motivation of students in lower groups, ultimately hindering their academic progress. (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). Another type of school-based provision for G&T children is the use of extension classes and activities as enrichment to challenge and develop G&T students' skills beyond the standard curriculum (Sutton Trust, 2012; Education Endowment Foundation, 2021).

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have surveyed the development of the policy landscape for gifted education, exploring the specific approaches adopted by Türkiye and England to address the needs of gifted learners. When comparing the two, it is apparent that gifted education in England has been shaped by a combination of economic and egalitarian arguments, while in Türkiye, the emphasis is more on an economic justification, highlighting the development of the country's human capital (Eyre, 2009; Ainscow, 2010; Sak *et al.*, 2015; Koshy, Smith and Casey, 2018).

Another significant distinction between these countries is that while there have been times when special programmes and policies were put in place for this group in England, current efforts are focused on promoting gifted education in a more egalitarian manner, without explicitly categorising and providing special services for G&T children (Campbell, Muijs, Neelands, Robinson, Eyre and Hewston, 2007). On the other hand, Türkiye has policies in place that are designed to specifically identify and define G&T children, as well as to provide support for them through a variety of provisions (Sak *et al.*, 2015).

As noted, both countries, with their distinct drivers and approaches, address the education of G&T children in different ways. The impact of addressing gifted education through different drivers and varied approaches resurfaced in the context of teacher education and the

conceptualisation of the term. In this regard, while Türkiye has specific mandatory regulations for in-service and initial teacher education for gifted education, positioning itself as a nation that have policy directly addresses the needs of G&T children, England does not. In England, it is left to the discretion of teacher education providers to decide whether and how to incorporate gifted education into teacher education programmes (Mönks and Pflüger, 2005; Tortop and Ersoy, 2015; CoHE, 2015; 2018; DfE, 2019). Once again, the section on the 'The Conceptualisation of term' highlights the result of the contrasting approaches developed by these two countries towards gifted education: the absence of an official national definition in England, unlike Türkiye where an official definition exists (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft, Long and Danechi, 2020; MoNE, 2021a). However, this definition does not encompass DME children "who exhibit remarkable talents or strengths in some areas and problematic weaknesses in others" as stated by Baum and Owen (2004, p.29).

It is also clear that gifted education in both countries has been either directly or indirectly influenced by the 'Three key documents' previously mentioned. One of these documents is the *Salamanca Statement* (1994), which emphasises the integration of gifted education into mainstream school systems (UNESCO, 1994). In this regard, despite their differences within the policy formulation process for G&T children, England and Türkiye have something in common: a dedication to embedding gifted education into the mainstream school system (Campbell, Muijs, Neelands, Robinson, Eyre and Hewston, 2007; MoNE, 2012). Another example is seen in England, where the PISA (2009) test result was used as an argument to improve gifted education in the Ofsted (2013) report (Ofsted, 2013). Türkiye's approach to gifted education reflects similar arguments expressed in the Parliamentary Assembly's *Recommendation 1248*, encompassing steps taken to ensure that G&T children benefit from appropriate educational conditions, mirroring the recommendations outlined in this document (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 2016). The 'Three key documents' mentioned earlier are reflected in both countries' gifted education policy formulation processes albeit in different ways.

Regarding practical provision for G&T children, although there are significant differences in the primary approaches to gifted education between England and Türkiye, grade-skipping is a provision that exists in both countries (Official Gazette, 2014; DfE, 2021). Similarly, in England, 'grammar schools', and in Türkiye, 'science high schools' can be viewed as examples of selective schools where academically G&T children can attend, highlighting an additional

parallel between the two countries (Casey, and Koshy, 2013; Cribb, Sibieta and Vignoles, 2013; Boettger and Reid, 2015; Güçyeter, Kanlı, Özyaprak and Leana-Taşcılar, 2017).

In sum, this policy analysis sheds light on the operational aspects of gifted education in policy contexts and provides a valuable baseline foundation for understanding the views and practises of teachers regarding G&T children in the two countries within their frameworks. This is the major focus of this research.

Chapter 5: Methodology and research design

Overview

This chapter discusses the research methodology: it comprises four sections. The first section elucidates the philosophical paradigms that underpin the epistemological and ontological foundations of the research. The second section is dedicated to discussing the two major methodological approaches commonly used by researchers. Section three outlines the chosen research design. Finally, section four provides a detailed account of the research design process, including the study sample, the methods of data collection and analysis, the criteria for ensuring data quality, and the ethical considerations throughout this research.

It is important to emphasise that throughout the coverage "Methodology and research design", I have adopted a scoping approach to present the body of the literature on the topic. This approach allows me to focus on a particular aspect of the topic, especially when the topic has not been extensively reviewed, or when textbooks use heterogeneous vocabulary to describe the same concepts and methods due to their complex nature, particularly in areas where there is a lack of consensus or agreement among scholars. As such, the literature presented within this chapter related to the research paradigms, methods and methodologies is a product of my personal choices, prioritising certain aspects of the literature that provide a descriptive overview of the topic.

Research Objectives and Questions

The research has several explicit objectives, all of which are closely interrelated. The first objective is to investigate gifted education policy and provision in England and Türkiye from the early 1990s onward. The timeframe mentioned in this research has been purposely chosen based on the radical changes observed in the field of gifted education in both countries since the 1990s, which was covered in detail in "Chapter 4: Policy" (Koshy, Pinheiro-Torres, and Portman-Smith, 2012; Kaya, 2013; Kurnaz 2014; Omeroglu, Sarikaya, Daglioglu, Cakmak, Karatas, Bulut and Basit, 2017). However, this is not a study of the policy itself, but rather a consideration of its impact on educational settings. Official, country-specific policy regarding gifted education provision therefore forms the context or background to the research being undertaken. In this sense, my intention is neither to reduce gifted education policy to algorithms nor to subsume school actions into formal policy intentions, ignoring that a wide range of factors may affect how policy is implemented, to understand what happens inside schools related to gifted education (Ball, 2005; Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins, 2011).

In light of this, the main role of the policy in my research is to outline the similarities and differences within the National or Local Authority policies and provisions regarding gifted education, to profoundly understand the operational differences between the two jurisdictions in meeting G&T children's educational needs. This will relate directly to a second component: how classroom teachers in selected primary schools in England and Türkiye have approached the policy and practice in catering for G&T children.

The rationale for focusing on primary school teachers in this research stems from Türkiye's historical practice of early student selection into different programmes or schools at the end of the primary phase, making it one of the OECD countries that implemented early selection. This system has undergone some changes over time and currently, at the end of elementary education (covering children aged 10 to 14), students are selected through a modified version of this process. This is being done predominantly according to the student attainment profile. Additionally, the selection of students by attainment at 11+ has been very apparent from the period post-1944 with the introduction of the 11+ examination and the 'tripartite' system, which

included Grammar Schools, Secondary Modern Schools, Comprehensive Schools, and Technical Schools. The literature shows the teachers of different streaming (grouping students according to their perceived general 'ability' or 'attainment' across all or most subjects) have different expectations, which results in different pedagogical approach (Bruner, 1996; Ball, 2005; MoNE, 2010; OECD. 2013; OECD, 2016b; Francis, Taylor, and Tereshchenko, 2019; OECD, 2020; Eurydice, 2023). Therefore, this research focuses on primary schools in England and Türkiye, considering the historical and current practices of student selection into different programmes or schools. In this regard, the explicit intention is to address the phenomenon within schools that do not have admission criteria directly based on students' ability or attainment to avoid the differences in teachers' expectations that resulted from student selection according to ability or attainment.

In this manner, the aim is to explore classroom teachers' views and practices concerning the understanding of terms 'giftedness and talent,' interpretation of the policy and identification of the student. Based on this, the intention is to understand variations in the teachers' awareness regarding the learning needs and preferences of G&T children and their pedagogical competencies that must be provided to underpin their effectiveness.

The final objective of this research is both to explore if there are problems that teachers face when they implement the policy related to G&T children in mainstream schools by considering each country and their unique policy backgrounds, and to highlight the common problems in the process of implementation of G&T policy in England and Türkiye. In summary, the main objectives of this research are as follows:

1. How do primary school teachers understand the terms 'gifted' and 'talented,' and consider their role in the identification and provision for G&T children?
2. How do primary school teachers interpret, and apply national, local, or institutional gifted education policy within these jurisdictions?
3. What challenges do primary school teachers face while implementing gifted education policies and provision and what steps do they take to overcome them?

Theorical Orientation

This section will provide an overview of theoretical models regarding the conceptualisation of giftedness and talent, identification, provision, and policy based on previous research. These models constitute the theoretical framework that underpins the formulation of my research questions, as well as the analysis and interpretation of data (Kivunja, 2016).

Drawing on the discussion of the term conceptualisation in "Chapter 2" to inform the approach and perspective adopted in this research, I have provided a concise definition of giftedness and talent as an individual's potential or talent for high or outstanding achievement in academic or non-academic areas compared to others of the same age. Having provided this concise definition, I will now elaborate further on it.

The definition of giftedness and talent used in this research is supported by the developmental approach to giftedness and talent, which views giftedness and talent as a dynamic process that unfolds over time through the systematic cultivation of potential or abilities. This approach contrasts with the innate or genetically oriented perspective, which regards giftedness and talent as a static trait (Gagné, 1995; Feldman, 2003). Continuing with this approach, many definitions have been proposed based on the developmental perspective of giftedness and talent. Based on previous theories related to giftedness and talent and the literature concerning abilities areas, Subotnik Olszweski-Kubilius and Worrell (2011) crafted a definition, claiming it to reflect the topics on which they assert a 'fairly broad scientific consensus' in their definition. This definition states that "Giftedness (a) reflects the values of society; (b) is typically manifested in actual outcomes, especially in adulthood; (c) is specific to domains of endeavour; (d) is the result of the coalescing of biological, pedagogical, psychological, and psychosocial factors; and (e) is relative not just to the ordinary (e.g., a child with exceptional art ability compared to peers) but to the extraordinary." (p.3) In this dynamic process, having a potential or talent is the starting point (Subotnik *et al.* 2011). However, teachers commonly hold the view that the main influences leading to the recognition of students as gifted and talented arise from exposure to stimulating experiences at home or parental influence, rather than genetic factors (Brighton, Moon, Jarvis, and Hockett, 2007). The role of society here is to actively provide these educational opportunities for students' self-fulfilment. The primary

objective of gifted education is to transform potential into outstanding performance and innovation (Subotnik *et al*., 2011). This, in turn, enables individuals to contribute to society by addressing the challenges of modern civilisation through the creation of knowledge and art, rather than simply consuming existing information (Renzulli, 2012).

The relationship between the gifted field and general education is, in this approach, regarded as a vital element within the transformative process. This perspective is grounded in the understanding that, for younger children, giftedness and talent is defined by their inherent potential or abilities, while, as individuals advance in their skill development, giftedness and talent is redefined by their outstanding achievements (Subotnik *et al*., 2021). The following discourse put forward by Subotnik *et al.* (2011) takes this a step further:

> Giftedness must be developed and sustained by way of training and interventions in domain-specific skills, the acquisition of the psychological and social skills needed to pursue difficult new paths, and the individual's conscious decision to engage fully in a domain. The goal of this developmental process is to transform potential talent during youth into outstanding performance and innovation in adulthood. (p.6)

The preceding discourse along with the integration of models in the extant literature lays the groundwork for the foundational principles of the Talent Development Mega Model (TDMM), as put forward by Subotnik *et al*., (2021). Within this framework, two pivotal tenets emerge. The first principal centres on the idea that, despite variations in individual abilities or potential, these are specific to certain domains and can be developed over time. The second principle underscores that different domains follow distinct trajectories in terms of their onset, peak, and end (Subotnik *et al*., 2011).

In this specific context, the transformation process becomes achievable when students are provided with accessible opportunities tailored to their areas and levels of developed talent. These opportunities encompass the acquisition and enhancement of knowledge and abilities, available in both in-school and out-of-school settings, including enrichment and acceleration programmes, guidance and mentoring, as well as opportunities to engage with both their talented peers and experts in their respective fields. However, the efficacy of these provisions is limited unless the recipients demonstrate a genuine interest and dedication to fully engage in these opportunities (Subotnik, Olszweski-Kubilius and Worrell, 2020; 2021). Thus, a significant feature of this framework is its focus on the development of psychosocial skills that

facilitate outstanding achievement. This emphasis aligns with the defined roles of individuals engaged in the process of nurturing G&T children outlined below:

> Important skills such as positive attitudes toward challenge, resiliency, goal setting, self-directed learning, and growth mindsets can be actively developed by teachers, coaches, parents, and mentors. These skills can be fostered by providing the right level of challenge and appropriate goals for students within classrooms and programmes, combined with emotional support for potential effects on self-concept and motivation. Individuals who work with talented youth can promote a mastery orientation by giving appropriate feedback focused on improvement and growth and by assisting students in benchmarking their talent development against other talented peers or professional standards. Mentors and professionals who have contact with talented youth can help to cultivate skills particularly important for their domain and their stages of talent development, such as teachability and openness to feedback for earlier stage students and risk-taking for more advanced students (Subotnik *et al*., 2021, pp. 437-438).

To meet the expectations for the development of psychosocial skills mentioned above, educators must be knowledgeable about the cognitive and psychosocial skills required at each stage of talent development. Furthermore, they must have a deeper understanding of the subject matter in order to cater to advanced content requirements earlier. They must also be able to consistently assess students' interests, strengths, and learning needs and adapt their instruction accordingly (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius, Corwith, Calvert and Worrell, 2023).

Within the context of this framework, identification is vital for the transformation of talent or ability into outstanding achievement. However, two important practical considerations stand out within the mega model. The first is a shift away from a standardised, one-size-fits-all approach and towards providing a range of gifted services that address the needs of students at various stages of talent development and across multiple domains. The second involves a shift away from the traditional approach of identifying and then placing students into programmes and towards a more dynamic approach of providing services upfront, followed by assessments centring on assessing abilities that are relevant to the subject area provided to determine additional service requirements such as acceleration and enrichment (Subotnik *et al*., 2021). Thus, such an approach not only identifies children who begin school ready for advanced content but also enables the capture of those who have potential or ability but, for various reasons, have had a lack of exposure to early learning experiences in various subjects (Subotnik *et al*., 2023).

Having covered both theoretical and practical dimensions of gifted education, it is crucial to underline that policy enactment theory plays a pivotal role in bridging these components within my research. This, in turn, contributes significantly to shaping my overarching theoretical

framework. The comprehensive assessment conducted in "Chapter 4" of this research aims to provide a foundation for understanding how gifted education is operated in the two countries covered in this research. However, as stressed by Ball (1994) "Policies do not normally tell you what to do, they create circumstances in which the range of options available in deciding what to do are narrowed or changed, or particular goals or outcomes." (p.19) Thus, having a policy and enacting a policy are two distinct matters, as the latter is influenced by several interconnected dimensions. First, the design of a policy, how the issue is framed and what solutions are proposed, largely determines its feasibility and effectiveness. Second, the engagement of stakeholders, such as individuals and organisations involved in enacting the policy, is essential, as their roles, characteristics, and interactions significantly shape the implementation process. Third, the broader institutional, policy, and societal context must be considered; existing policies in education and other sectors may either support or hinder implementation efforts. Finally, a well-structured implementation strategy that outlines a clear operational plan is vital to translating policy into practice. Even when all these elements are considered, the act of putting a policy into action remains inherently intricate and challenging (Viennet, and Pont, 2017). A facet influencing policy enactment can be the varying positions and perspectives of teachers and other education workers, with some interpreting policy to align with their own interests, while others prioritise concerns that differ from the prevailing dominant policy imperatives (Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins, 2011).

This diversity of responses is especially important within neoliberal, top-down education policies, which often aim to establish consistent and strong expectations of performativity, accountability, and competition across schools. Although these policies establish a strong regulatory framework, they do not fully prescribe how teachers engage with them. Instead, teachers navigate, resist, or adapt these top-down demands based on their professional values and the specific realities of their school environments. Within such a top-down system that prioritises accountability, schools and teachers are primarily held responsible for examination and test results, often at the expense of other vital educational values such as critical awareness, collaboration, and active citizenship. This focus on measurable outcomes narrows the curriculum and significantly reduces both teacher and learner autonomy. Furthermore, it overwhelms daily educational practice with a confusing array of figures, indicators, and comparisons, intensifying pressure on educators and reinforcing a system overwhelmingly focused on accountability. As a result, uncertainty may grow among teachers about which aspects of their work are truly valued and how to prioritise their efforts, leading many to

question whether their actions stem from genuine conviction or merely from the pressure to meet external targets and standards (Ball, 2018; Ball and Bowe, 2020).

The specific context of educational environments can also be another aspect of policy enactment, influencing both the implementation and overall effectiveness of policies. This context encompasses various elements, including the existence of overlapping policies in schools, as well as factors like school intake, ethos, culture, material resources (buildings, budgets, etc.), and external factors like local authority relations and pressures from league tables, all of which collectively shape the policy environment (Braun, Ball, Maguire and Hoskins, 2011; Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2015). Hence, it is essential to consider the specific educational context when delineating the boundaries between the phenomenon and its surroundings, particularly during the examination of teachers' view and practices related to G&T children. This methodological approach constitutes a central emphasis within this research.

To sum up, the theoretical and practical dimensions of gifted education examined here, as well as the theory related to how policy is enacted (regardless of whether or not there is a specific policy targeting G&T children) are central driving forces in shaping my theoretical orientation. These elements are critical in determining the methodology, methods, research design, and data analysis in this research to investigate teachers' views and practises regarding gifted education.

5.1 Research paradigm

A paradigm is the philosophical way of thinking that forms methodology, along with fundamental ideas, methods, and theories that provide context for the research process to ground its logic and criteria. A paradigm comprises four elements, namely, epistemology, ontology, methodology, and methods (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Scotland, 2012).

Without nominating a paradigm as a first step, there is no basis for what makes up a given field or for defining which theory is relevant (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). However, throughout the research process, researchers must justify the choice and use of methodologies and methods that underlie their philosophical stance (Crotty, 1998). In this context, it is worth noting that being aware of philosophical stances regarding the nature of research-based knowledge, personal values and assumptions about the reality that researchers bring to their work is essential (Seale, 2018). Locating the knowledge related to existing research paradigms in the research that underpins the researcher's philosophical orientation and informs every decision made in the research process is crucial (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Thus, the following discussion will address the philosophical dimensions of the paradigm, focusing on ontology and epistemology, respectively.

Ontology is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Researchers have assumptions about realities whilst conducting research. Ontology examines researchers' belief system about how reality exists and what can be learned about reality. It focuses on the assumption being made to believe that something makes sense or is real (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). In this regard, ontology helps researchers to examine their underlying belief system and philosophical assumptions regarding the nature of being, existence and reality, which is vital for understanding how you interpret the data you gather. Although the use of the different terms regarding ontological stances is varied in different texts, the examples of ontological positions could be classified within two umbrella terms: 'objectivism' and 'constructivism' (Grix, 2019).

Objectivism is an ontological stance based on the assumption that social entity and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors (Grix, 2019). In contrast, the constructivist stance asserts that reality is socially constructed that is based on knowers' apperceptions. Constructivists do not entirely reject the existence of external reality. However, they claim that humans are perceivers and interpreters who construct their own reality by interpreting a function of their prior experiences, and beliefs that they use to interpret objects and events (Jonassen, 1991). In this view, reality is pluralistic, and constructivists seek to understand the richness of a socially determined world rather than the essence of reality (Richards, 2003). It is clear from the difference between objectivism and constructivism

regarding the existence of reality how your ontological position will affect your approaches to social inquiry (Grix, 2019).

Epistemology is concerned with the theory of knowledge. As stressed by Guba and Lincoln (1994), epistemology poses the following questions: "What is the nature of relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known." (p.108) It is the philosophical study of knowledge dealing with how knowledge can be created, acquired, and communicated to another human being (Krauss, 2005).

Various epistemological positions have been proposed by researchers, and they often overlap concerning the problem related to the origin of the knowledge. In this respect, 'positivism' and 'interpretivism' are two contradictory epistemological positions, classified as the most influential. The main reason behind this contradiction is that while positivists believe in the ability of humans to learn about reality using their senses, interpretivists argue that knowledge comes from rational thought rather than from the external world. Most philosophers who have studied epistemology have ultimately supported one of these assumptions or various strands of them (Gray, 2004; Weber, 2004). Later in this section, more details regarding both positivism and interpretivism will be provided.

To start with positivism, it is historical legacy originated from Aristotle, Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Auguste Comte, along with the assumption that the social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world. Many of these figures regarded natural science as a model for human science (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2012; Grix, 2019). The relationship between researcher and reality has been captured by Crotty (1998) as:

> A tree in the forest is a tree, regardless of whether anyone is aware of its existence or not. As an object of that kind, it carries the intrinsic meaning of treeness. When human beings recognise it as a tree, they are simply discovering a meaning that has been lying in wait for them all along. (p.8)

In this manner, the role of the researcher is to discover an already existing meaning. The positivist seeks objectivity in the research process by testing the theory or describing an experience through scientific methods such as observation and measurement to analyse the social world (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006; Bryman, 2012; Grix, 2019). A few decades ago, it was the most dominant paradigm influencing early studies of gifted education. Before the field

experienced a paradigm shift, early scholars of gifted education began to quantify individual differences with the invention of mental measurement tests (Lo and Porath 2017).

On the other hand, interpretivism epistemology asserts the differences between the subject matter of social science and that of natural science. It stresses the necessity of the different logic of research procedure for social scientists to acquire subjective meaning of social actions (Bryman, 2012). As Grix (2019) has emphasised, "Therefore, objective or value-free analysis is impossible, because knowledge is theoretically and discursively laden and a researcher necessarily is the sum total of his or her own personal and the subjective opinions, attitudes, and values." (p.199)

Thus far, I have briefly described the two components of research paradigms, namely, ontology and epistemology. Also, I have outlined some common beliefs and assumptions regarding epistemological and ontological concerns. As it was stressed above that while positivist seeks objectivity by employing scientific method to address social phenomenon in the research process, interpretivist and constructivist share common characteristics that rely on participants' views of the situation being studied. As Schwandt (1994) has indicated that "Proponents of these persuasions share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it." (p. 221) Since the objective of this research is to acquire knowledge that is obtained by individuals' views, interpretivist/constructivist philosophical stances have been embraced within this research.

5.2 Methodology

The methodology refers to the collection of methods and rules by which the principles, theories and values that underpin a particular approach to research (Somekh and Lewin, 2005). It is an overall approach to guide the study by justifying and explaining why, what, from where, when and how data is collected and analysed (Scotland, 2012). Leedy and Ormrod (2005) have

outlined the two primary functions of research methodology as: "1. To dictate and control the acquisition of data and 2. To corral the data after their acquisition and extract meaning from them." (p.6)

In light of this, it could be said that the methodology aims to find appropriate scientific procedures to keep the researcher on the right track for the investigation of the research phenomenon (Goundar, 2012). Thus, the choice of an appropriate methodology is vital for achieving research objectives and should be shaped by the set of complex considerations as: researchers' epistemological concerns, the aim of the research, the nature of the research phenomenon, organisational, historical, political, ethical and evidential factors (Buchanan, and Bryman, 2007). There are three main approaches for conducting research: qualitative, quantitative, and their combination mixed methodology (Tashakkori, Teddlie and Teddlie, 1998).

My orientation leaned towards qualitative research, as it aligns closely with the goals and nature of this research. The subsequent section details the primary methodologies chosen and explains the rationale behind their selection.

5.2.1 Qualitative research

The quantitative approach was the dominant research methodology in social sciences for much of the 20th century. Due to its limitation in understanding why things are the way they are in the social world and why people act the way they do, researchers started to explore new approaches, which resulted in the emergence of qualitative research. It began to spread during the 1950s and 1960s and became a major methodology in the social sciences (Williams, 2007; Tuli, 2010; Allwood, 2012).

The main concern of qualitative research is to answer questions related to experience, meaning, and perspective, usually from the standpoint of the participant, thereby contributing to deeper understanding (Sargeant, 2012; Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacey, 2016). Fossey, Harvey,

McDermott and Davidson (2002) have indicated that "Qualitative research aims to address questions concerned with developing an understanding of the meaning and experience dimensions of humans' lives and social worlds." (p.717) When there is poor or missing information regarding the topic and relevant theory base, and when variables are undisclosed, a qualitative research approach helps to elucidate what is important, that is, what needs to be studied. In this context, the potential advantages of qualitative research have been outlined by Leedy and Ormrod, (2015) as:

1. ***Exploration.*** They can help you gain initial insights into what has previously been a little-studied topic or phenomenon.
2. ***Multifaceted description***. They can reveal the complex, possibly multilayered nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people.
3. ***Verification***. They allow you to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories, or generalisations within real-world contexts.
4. ***Theory development***. They can enable you to develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives related to a phenomenon.
5. ***Problem identification***. They can help you uncover key problems, obstacles, or enigmas that exist within the phenomenon.
6. ***Evaluation***. They provide a means through which you can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices, or innovations. (p.271)

Qualitative methodology is mostly associated with an interpretivist/constructivist philosophy (Grix, 2019). Qualitative research processes rely on nonnumerical data, which requires specific data gathering methods such as observational methods, semi-structured and in-depth interviews, and focus groups (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, and Ormston, 2013). In terms of research design, qualitative research is flexible, being constrained only by the researcher's imagination. There are different types of qualitative research, such as case study, ethnography, phenomenological study, and grounded theory study (Merriam, 2002; Leedy, and Ormrod, 2015; Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). However, it is important to stress that a case study, presented as a qualitative research type above, is perceived as a method by some authors (Starman, 2013). By being aware of two different points of view, a case study has been seen as a type of qualitative research in this study, and the following sections provide more details about the case study as a qualitative research type.

The discussion above addressed qualitative methodology. As stressed, my orientation leaned towards qualitative research because of the following reasons: qualitative methodology facilitates an in-depth exploration of the cultural and social contexts in which these concepts are situated by involving participants from both England and Türkiye. This approach is

essential for fully understanding the phenomenon of 'giftedness and talent,' which is widely accepted as socially constructed terms reflecting socio-cultural values in a given time and context (for more detailed information, revisit "Chapter 2"). The research also considers the context of policy and aims to understand the differences in teachers' policy enactment by taking their priorities into account, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of how policies are interpreted and implemented in practice (for more detailed information, revisit 'Theoretical orientation' section in this chapter).

5.3 Research design

Research design is an overall design or plan outlining what researchers will do to answer their research questions (Cook and Cook, 2016). In the relevant part of this research, the methodology was described as an overarching approach including the methods outlining the way in which research is to be conducted (Somekh and Lewin, 2005). However, no detailed explanation was provided of what the method means and what it encompasses. The method refers to the set of instruments being employed during the research process, which might be part of both data collection, such as questionnaires, interviews or observation, and the data analysis process, which includes statistical techniques or extracting themes from unstructured data. It also covers the different aspect of the research process such as sampling (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). This section begins by explaining the research methodology adopted in this research and the rationale behind its selection. Then, considering this methodological choice, the following sections will highlight the research methods used, along with a logical basis for these decisions.

5.3.1 The case study

Case study, a form of qualitative research, has been chosen as the most appropriate methodology to fulfil the research objectives. The literature contains a "definitional morass" (Gerring, 2004) in attempting to define the term. For instance, Yin (2009) has described a case study as a detailed examination, description and exploration of a single case such as a person, group, place or event within its real-life context, especially when the boundary between the phenomenon and the case is not clearly distinct. Stake (1995), a prominent advocate of case study in the social sciences, has emphasised that "Case study is the study of particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances." (p. xi) When examining the definitions of both authors, a shared emphasis becomes evident: on a thorough analysis and detailed description of a single unit or system. To achieve this, case studies often employ a focused approach, prioritising a restricted number of pivotal factors that are necessary for understanding the unit or system under examination. The unit or system on which a case study focuses can encompass a wide array of elements, including historical or recent events, specific situations, and new or existing programmes across various disciplines (Eckstein, 2000; Hancock, Algozzine and Lim, 2021).

A case study enables the answering of 'how?' and 'why?' questions to be answered, in order to gain a deeper understanding of complex phenomena by considering the effect of the given context (Merriam, 2002; Hafiz, 2008; Yin, 2009; Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, it is an approach that enables the researcher to seek an exploration of a phenomenon within an everyday context and to put forward the interpretation regarding what is observed (Bassey, 1999). Beyond its utility for investigating 'how' and 'why' questions, several other crucial factors come into play when deciding whether to employ a case study approach in research. These considerations include situations when you can not manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study, in which you want to encompass contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study, or when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clear (Yin, 2009).

Case studies can be based entirely on secondary data analysis as well as incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods (Goodrick, 2014). In other words, there are no specific methods of data collection or analysis whilst conducting case study research. The flexibility that a case study allows to involve both multiple sources of data like questionnaires, interviews, observations, documents and different types of social entities such as organisations, people, relationships, attitudes is one of its major advantages (Easton, 2010). However, collecting data from different sources by different case study tools may result in a massive number of documents. It may pose serious data management and organisation problems, which is one of the common criticisms of case studies (Zainal, 2007). Besides, while another advantage of a case study is its uniqueness to explore the difficulties in particular context, the corresponding disadvantage is the lack of the basis for generalisation from a single case (Simons, 1996; Easton, 2010).

In terms of its philosophical foundation, both Yin (2009) and Stake (1995) ground their approaches to case studies on the constructivist paradigm to understand the behavioural conditions from the actor's perspective that guides a case study methodology (Zainal, 2007; Hafiz, 2008).

Thus far, the discussion has encompassed the definition of a case study, its philosophical foundation, the appropriate circumstances for its utilisation, as well as its advantages and disadvantages, which are applicable to all case studies. In the following paragraphs, I will examine different types of case studies, acknowledging that authors may have employed varying terminology to characterise them, like the conceptual ambiguity encountered when defining case studies. Thus, this examination will focus on the classifications put forth by two prominent scholars in the field, Yin and Stake.

To start with Stake, who has divided his case studies into the three main forms in accordance with the researchers' interest: which are an intrinsic, instrumental and collective case study. In this manner, intrinsic case study is applied when the researcher has an interest in the case. Instrumental case study focuses on understanding more than what is obvious to the observer. The role of the case within an instrumental study is supportive because it helps facilitate our understanding of something else. In contrast, a 'collective case study' refers to studies involving multiple cases (Stake, 1995).

On the other hand, Yin has classified three case studies according to their purpose as: 'exploratory', 'explanatory' and 'descriptive case study.' While the 'explanatory case study' aims to answer the 'why' and 'how' questions to explain presumed causal links, the purpose of exploratory case studies is to find answers for 'what' and 'how' questions for developing pertinent hypotheses and propositions for further inquiry. Third, the 'descriptive case study' examines a phenomenon in its real-world context where it occurred to reveal patterns and offer detailed explanations of the phenomenon under investigation (Yin, 2009; Creswell and Poth, 2016). Yin also distinguishes between 'single case study', 'holistic case study' and 'multiple-case study.' A single case study, as defined in the definition of a case study above, is a type of case study that involves a detailed examination, description, and exploration of a single case. A 'holistic case study', like a 'single case study' case but with embedded units, allows the researcher to explore other potential influencers or subunits within the one unique/extreme/critical case. In contrast, a multiple case study, resembling Stake's collective case study, allows researchers to examine and compare various settings to investigate differences both within and between cases. Furthermore, in a multiple-case study, the 'cases within the case' approach can be utilised. This method involves conducting an in-depth analysis of a single case to achieve a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon. The primary objective is to unveil patterns and themes that may not be readily discernible when examining other cases. It is also important to stress that, depending on the research purpose, 'single', 'holistic', and 'multiple-case study' may fall into the categories of exploratory, explanatory, or descriptive (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Lucas, Fleming and Bhosale, 2018).

This research primarily centres on addressing the 'how' question, with a primary focus on teachers in both England and Türkiye as the central subjects of this case study. It explores specifically teachers' interpretation and implementation of gifted education policies, their understanding of the term 'giftedness and talent,' and their strategies for overcoming encountered challenges whilst catering to the needs of G&T children. Given the inherently multi-case and cross-country nature of this study, the choice of utilising descriptive multiple-case study was deemed the most fitting method to fulfil the research objectives effectively. The decision to utilise the case studies approach in this research is further driven by its effectiveness in addressing the research phenomenon, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clear. The necessity of this can be explicated as follows: the literature emphasises that selecting students based on their abilities can shape teachers'

views, affecting the quality of education and opportunities, typically benefiting those in the upper tiers and disadvantaging those in the lower tiers (Ansalone, 2003; Campbell, 2015). Considering the potential impact of this on the central aspects of this study, namely teachers' views and practices regarding G&T children, this research focuses on state primary schools that do not have admission criteria based on students' ability or attainment. The purpose of this strategic decision is to clarify the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context and to focus more precisely on the research phenomenon. Furthermore, I recognised the necessity for a more comprehensive examination of this issue because historically, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds have been underrepresented in gifted education programmes (Borland and Wright, 1994; Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021; Mun, Ezzani and Yeung, 2021; Long, McCoach, Siegle, Callahan and Gubbins, 2023). Rather than exploring the interaction between socio-economic status (SES) and teachers' views and practices as co-dependent variables, the study focused on examining teachers' perspectives and practices regarding G&T students within their particular school context. Thus, the adoption of a case study approach in this research allowed for a comprehensive examination of the research phenomenon while taking these contextual elements into careful consideration in shaping the cases. Another rationale for employing the case study approach is its inherent capacity to enable the use of multiple data sources, such as questionnaires, interviews, and secondary data, to examine the research phenomenon from different angles (Easton, 2010).

In this section, I have provided a general overview of what comprises a case study and why I have chosen to use it in this research. The following section explains how I adopted the case study approach in this research, including my case selection process.

5.3.2 Cases selection

The decisions and choices of what is to be foregrounded and backgrounded, what is to be included and what is left out for the selection of cases have implications for the generation and analysis of data and, ultimately, the meaningful, ethical and effective representation of

the cases (Goodrick, 2014). Kaarbo and Beasley (1999) have stressed "There are three important tasks in selecting cases that involve control: selecting comparable cases, selecting cases that vary on the dependent variable, and selecting cases across subgroups of the population to address alternative explanations." (p.280)

In this research, before addressing the challenges mentioned in the 'Challenges of data collection in the post-COVID period' section, the initial plan was to select Istanbul and London as research sites based on perceived equivalences. This was because both Istanbul and London play a significant role as the commercial and cultural capital of each country. Based on the 2021 data, Istanbul with 15.840 million residents and London with 9.102 million residents, these two cities are the most crowded and multicultural cities in their respective countries (Population UK, 2022; TUIK, 2022). In addition, while London and Istanbul are the cities with the highest incomes in England and Türkiye, respectively, they also have the highest income inequality. Therefore, there is a significant gap between the rich and disadvantaged people in these cities (UK Parliament, 2022; London Datastore, 2022; TUIK, 2022).

As previously mentioned, I leveraged the opportunity provided by a case study to examine the research phenomenon of teachers' views and practices related to G&T children within their own context, while considering the socio-economic backgrounds of the enrolled students. To achieve this, the cases in each country were divided into three groups based on their respective levels of 'educational and socio-economic disadvantage,' as indicated by recent national data. This division allowed me to assess and compare schools with diverse SES backgrounds in their unique contexts, while also acknowledging the limitations inherent in the datasets used during the classification process.

Publicly available datasets were used to select cases in both countries (Istanbul Valiligi, 2020; London Datastore, 2022). To determine the areas to choose the schools from different SES levels as a case in London, the Indices of Deprivation 2019 (ID2019) were used. For the same process in Türkiye, the research conducted in Istanbul in 2020 and ranking the regions according to their income levels was used as a basis.

As previously emphasised, the Indices of Deprivation 2019 (ID2019) were utilised to identify schools and subsequently create cases in London. In light of this data set, I divided 32 boroughs into 3 categories according to their level of deprivation and chose 3 most deprived, 3 average deprived and 3 least deprived boroughs from each category (see table1).

Table 1: Based on ID2019, London boroughs that this research focuses on purposively

Most Deprived London Boroughs	**Average Deprived London Boroughs**	**Least Deprived London Boroughs**
Hackney	Sutton	Wandsworth
Haringey	Hammersmith and Fulham	Richmond upon Thames
Kensington and Chelsea	Hounslow	Redbridge

However, this selection had a certain disadvantage that the ID2019 may differ within boroughs, which was one of the biggest obstacles for employing schools within my research based on the assumption that these schools reflect the overall SES level of boroughs, where they are located. Thus, in order to overcome this difficulty, I utilised Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) deprivation data, which enables me to access the information related to changing deprivation rates within London boroughs by ward levels. This approach aimed to choose the most suitable wards, and the state primary schools located in these wards in accordance with the characteristics of the three groups I mentioned above. When I approached the schools located in these wards, I also used another set of data available on school websites related to the proportion (%) of students eligible for free school meal to find a most suitable school in accordance with the reasons why these boroughs were chosen. This was done as follows: According to Explore Education Statistics (2023), 23.8% of pupils are eligible for free school meals in England. To categorise schools based on their socio-economic context, I employed specific criteria. For schools located in the most deprived wards, I identified those with more than 30% of students eligible for free school meals. Conversely, for schools situated in the least deprived wards, I focused on schools with less than 15% of students eligible for free school meals. In wards with an average deprivation rate, I identified schools with between 15% and 30% of students eligible for free school meals.

On the other hand, to identify research sites in Istanbul, I used the relevant part of a research conducted by the Republic of Türkiye Governorship of Istanbul in 2020, which ranked İstanbul's 39 boroughs based on household income. Thus, I divided İstanbul's 39 boroughs into 3 categories according to household income level and chose three boroughs from each category in accordance with the characteristics of these groups (see Table 2). As can be seen above, I adopted a similar approach to choose research sites in England and Türkiye. However, I could not access any data related to both the changing SES levels within Istanbul boroughs listed below and the SES level of the school's population located there. Thus, I directly focused on the schools located in these boroughs in Istanbul.

Table 2: Istanbul boroughs that this research focused on purposively

Boroughs with the Highest Household Income Level in Istanbul	**Boroughs with the Average Household Income Level in Istanbul**	**Boroughs with the Lowest Household Income Level in Istanbul**
Besiktas	Zeytinburnu	Arnavutköy
Kadıköy	Avcılar	Çatalca
Bakırköy	Büyükçekmece	Sultanbeyli

As mentioned previously, this was my initial approach to selecting cases; however, I encountered difficulty in gaining access to schools in the boroughs identified in London and obtaining ethical approval to collect primary data from Türkiye.

To address this challenge in my research for the selection of cases in England, although I initially focused on specific schools in London, I gathered data from various schools across London to which I was able to gain access. As the next step, I divided these schools into three groups using ID2019 data and the proportion (%) of pupils eligible for free school meals. Based on the ID2019 dataset, the schools within my access were classified into distinct categories according to levels of socio-economic disadvantage within their respective regions. Like my initial plan, these categories include the most deprived boroughs, average deprived boroughs, and the least deprived boroughs. Additionally, I considered the percentage of students eligible for free school meals as a secondary criterion. For instance, if a school fell within the category of the most deprived boroughs according to the ID2019 dataset but had

between 15% and 30% of a student population eligible for free school meals, I placed that school in the group representing the national average. As mentioned above, this categorisation scheme included 15% and below for the least deprived boroughs, between 15% and 30% for average deprived boroughs, and 30% and above for the most deprived boroughs. In this way, I have given the final form of the three cases in England. In conjunction with secondary data sources such as school policies, curriculum documents, and Ofsted inspection reports, I subsequently conducted semi-structured interviews with one teacher from each of these schools.

Following this, I selected a school as a representative case that does not belong to either the least deprived or most deprived borough categories. Consequently, this school is not subject to any criteria that may potentially impact the quality of educational services provided for G&T children. For this school, in contrast to others I had access to in England, my approach involved conducting semi-structured interviews with multiple teachers and the headteacher. Additionally, I supplemented these interviews with secondary data sources, such as school policies, to achieve a more comprehensive understanding and derive insights that could be more broadly applied.

Due to the challenges, I faced in accessing the initially planned schools in England, I explained how I adapted and implemented the case study design above. Now, I will discuss the adaptations I made in the case study design for collecting data in Türkiye, as I could not obtain the required ethical permission. These adaptations can be summarised as follows: instead of collecting primary data, I gained insights into the research phenomenon by analysing the existing literature concerning teachers' views and practices regarding G&T children. However, due to the limitations in existing research and the challenges associated with using secondary data to address the previously mentioned contextual factors, I was unable to form three separate cases in Türkiye, as originally planned. Instead, I treated the analysed data as a single case. Next, the research process was initiated by conducting within-case analyses for both the cases established in Türkiye and those in England. Subsequently, I conducted a cross-case analysis, contrasting the case formed in England stemming from the group of average-deprived schools, with the cases formed in Türkiye.

To summarise the entire process, from the initial case study design to the final approach, it would be as follows: in my initial research approach, I opted for the case study methodology

to explore teachers' views and practices regarding G&T children. I acknowledged the pivotal role of various elements, such as the selection of students based on ability or attainment, SES level of students which might affect the quality of provision related to this cohort. This choice was motivated by the intricate nature of the subject, where the lines between the phenomenon and its contextual factors often blur, a condition that aligns with the scenarios where the case study methodology is typically employed (Yin, 2009). Considering the difficulties I encountered in obtaining responses from the targeted schools in England, it became essential for me to purposefully readjust my research approach. Here, I capitalised on the adaptability of the case study methodology, as it aligns with the principle that considerations for applying a case study include situations when you cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study (Yin, 2009). Leveraging the data collected from accessible schools, I formed my cases as schools from 'least deprived,' 'most deprived,' and 'average deprived' boroughs. The abbreviations for these cases are as follows: 'Case A' represents schools in the average deprived London boroughs; 'Case M' is specifically designated for the most deprived schools, and 'Case L' represents schools from the least deprived boroughs. Following the presentation of these abbreviations, an example of the average deprived borough case is provided through Calypso Primary School. The utilisation of this categorisation facilitated the reduction of the impact of contextual factors on the phenomenon within the scope of my research. In essence, I initially chose the 'case study' methodology due to the ambiguity between the phenomenon and its context, and subsequently, I capitalised on the advantages offered by this methodology as it aligned with the specific challenges I encountered, ultimately allowing me to explore the research phenomenon in distinct contexts. Next, I conducted a comprehensive analysis of a single school from the 'average deprived' boroughs, as an example of the average deprived borough case. The objective here was to gain insights into this example based on the data presented, while simultaneously considering a broader sample of schools not subject to any criteria that may potentially impact the quality of educational services provided for G&T children in England. From this standpoint, this approach embodies the unique feature that sets the case study apart from all other methods, namely, its reliance on the covariation demonstrated by a single unit while also aiming to elucidate aspects of a broader set of units (Gerring, 2004). I had previously mentioned that case study offers researchers the flexibility to utilise various data collection methods (Goodrick, 2014). Bearing in mind the challenges, I encountered in obtaining ethical approval in Türkiye I utilised this advantage of the case study methodology. The flexibility enabled me to conduct the data collection process in Türkiye using secondary data. Ultimately, through the utilisation of the numerous advantages

that the case study methodology provides, I completed the process of case selection and established cases in both countries.

5.3.3 Description of the cases

In this section, the most recent Ofsted reports of the participating schools, school policies obtained from their official websites, and the extracurricular activities offered at these schools will be presented as a description of the cases formed in this research to provide context for the thematic analysis conducted in later sections (for more detailed information, see ' Data analysis' section). The table below outlines the order of the cases to be described, including information about the participating schools and the teachers who took part from each school. It is important to stress that, according to the statistic which shows the average size of a primary school in England is 281 pupils (Gov.uk, 2021), schools with a size between 281 and 350 pupils are considered to have an 'average-sized', while schools with more than 350 pupils are classified as 'above-average sized', in the table below.

Table 3: Contextual overview of participating schools

Case	Analysis Order	Name of schools	Most Recent Ofsted Evaluation Rating and Year	School Size	Names of the Teachers
L	1	Littlewood Primary School	Good 2014	Average-sized	Lily
		Lakeview Primary School	Outstanding 2014	Above-average sized	Luke
		Lavender Primary School	Outstanding 2013	Average-sized	Liam
A	2	Applewood Primary School	Good 2023	Above-average Sized	Aspal
		Amberley Primary	Good 2023	Above-average Sized	Ava
		Ashford Primary School	Good 2018	Above-average	Adam

M	3	Maplewood Primary School	Outstanding 2023	Average-sized	Marry
		Meadowbrook Primary School	Good 2003	Above-average sized	Megan
		Mountainview Primary School	Good 2022	Average-sized	Michelle
		Magnolia Primary School	Good 2022	Above-average sized	Melissa
Exemplification of Case A	4	Calypso Primary School	Good 2022	Average-sized	Alex Emily David Sarah John

5.3.3.1 Case L

In this research, Case Study L comprises three schools from the least deprived London borough: Littlewood Primary School, Lakeview Primary School, and Lavender Primary School. Littlewood Primary School was evaluated by Ofsted in 2014 and received a rating of 'Good.' It is an average-sized school. In contrast, Lakeview Primary School, considered 'Outstanding,' underwent its most recent Ofsted inspection in 2014 and is larger than most primary schools nationally. Lavender Primary School, also rated as 'Outstanding,' with its last Ofsted inspection dating back to 2013. It is an average-sized school.

Before commencing the analysis based on Ofsted inspection reports and publicly available school data, it is important to reiterate that criticism related to the insufficiency of Ofsted's one-word ratings in capturing the quality of teaching and care that a school provides to children has been acknowledged (Ofsted, 2019; UK Parliament, 2023). Another point to mention regarding the Ofsted reports is the emphasis on school sizes: statistics indicate that the average size of a primary school in England is 281 pupils (Gov.uk., 2021). Ofsted inspection reports for the schools under consideration in this research highlight those with more than 350 students, indicating that they are larger than most primary schools nationwide. Considering school size

in this case, it can be suggested that there is no apparent correlation between school size and the quality of teaching as assessed by Ofsted.

When analysing the Ofsted inspection reports for assessments related to G&T children, particular attention was given to the presence of specific terms such as 'most able' or 'more able,' which are commonly used by Ofsted to refer to this group (Ofsted, 2013). It was observed that all three schools received positive evaluations, as outlined below:

> Consistently high expectations lead to the most able pupils gaining exceptional knowledge in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. (Ofsted inspection report for Lakeview Primary School, 2014)
>
> The attainment of higher attaining pupils is significantly better than it was previously, and the overall profile is well above average. This is reflected in the increasing proportions reaching higher National Curriculum levels. (Ofsted inspection report for Lavender Primary School, 2013)
>
> More-able pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress in reading and mathematics. (Ofsted inspection report for Littlewood Primary School, 2014)

Based on the positive evaluations extracted from the Ofsted inspection reports for the three schools, it is evident that each school demonstrates a commitment to nurturing the academic growth and achievement of G&T children. Another common thread emphasised by Ofsted among the schools in this case is the close collaboration between parents and caregivers with the school, actively engaging in the educational process and consistently offering valuable feedback:

> The headteacher and deputy headteacher are excellent role models. Their pursuit of excellence motivates students, staff, governors, and parents and carers to excel for the school. (Ofsted inspection report for Littlewood Primary School, 2014)
>
> Parents and carers work closely with the school and regularly contribute their views. They are happy with pupils' behaviour and the rate of progress their children make. (Ofsted inspection report for Lakeview Primary School, 2014)
>
> The school is extremely successful in engaging parents and carers with how to help their children at home. Parents and carers comment on how successfully the school promotes homework and praise the guidance they receive about helping their children with independent study and research tasks at home. (Ofsted inspection report for Lavender Primary School, 2013)

This continuous involvement establishes a strong partnership between home and school, enabling a comprehensive approach to student development and nurturing a sense of

community engagement in the academic journey. Given that the schools in this case are in areas with above-average income levels, the emphasis on parents' and caregivers' active collaboration with the school might suggest a relationship between parents' socioeconomic backgrounds and effective parenting.

Another consistent highlight across the Ofsted inspection reports for these schools is the exceptional quality of their teaching staff and the available professional development opportunities for them:

> Central to the school's work is the leadership and management of the quality of teaching, which promotes good and sometimes excellent learning. Training and support for staff strengthen teaching and promote staff's confidence to try out new and different ideas. (Ofsted inspection report for Littlewood Primary School, 2014)

> All staff are skilled and highly consistent in their approaches to behaviour, which contributes to the pupils' strong academic achievement. (Ofsted inspection report for Lavender Primary School, 2013)

A closer examination of the Ofsted report specifically for Lakeview Primary School reveals a detailed evaluation of their teacher education practices:

> The school is part of a teacher training partnership with a local university. The headteacher also provides training for teachers and schools within the local authority and nationally. (Ofsted inspection report for Lakeview Primary School, 2014)

These extracts from the Ofsted assessments emphasise the considerable attention given to the excellence of the teaching personnel and the accessibility of professional growth prospects.

In terms of the evaluation of school policies, none of these schools have a dedicated policy for G&T children. Instead, these children are considered as part of the schools' inclusive education policies. However, Littlewood Primary School stands out, as its Inclusion Policy includes a specific section for 'more able' children and children with dual or multiple exceptionalities (DME):

> The school prioritises identifying underachievement in 'more able' students and developing strategies to address it. Some pupils might be referred to as DME (dual or multiple exceptionalities). This term describes students with Special Educational Needs and those considered 'more able.' The school recognises that students with dual or multiple exceptionalities (DME) are often overlooked and will work to address this issue. (Littlewood Primary School 's Policy for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), 2024)

According to this policy, actions to be taken for these groups to meet their needs are outlined as follows:

> Schoolwide, tasks and outcomes are differentiated. Children with higher abilities may be given more challenging tasks or be expected to work independently. Teachers aim to enhance the knowledge and skills of able students through open-ended tasks and higher-order questions. Students may engage in independent projects or access more challenging resources. Small group sessions led by teaching assistants or additional teachers can enhance the abilities of our capable students. These can happen in class or in smaller groups away from the main lesson. Children can join many extracurricular clubs at the school. Encourage 'more able' children to join clubs that enhance their strengths. Our school has partnerships with local independent schools and educational institutions in London, which invite us to select students for enrichment opportunities. Children will be chosen for learning opportunities based on the remit of the organising school or institution. (Littlewood Primary School's Policy for children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND), 2024)

Littlewood Primary School's Inclusion Policy demonstrates a proactive approach to addressing the needs of 'more able' children and those with dual or multiple exceptionalities (DME). By prioritising the identification of underachievement and implementing tailored strategies, the school aims to ensure these students receive the support they require to thrive academically and socially. However, the absence of specific evaluation regarding these provisions in the Ofsted inspection report raises some questions about the effectiveness or implementation of these policies. Additionally, the performance gap between 'most able children' at Littlewood Primary School, who only demonstrate good progress in reading and mathematics, and those in other schools who make good progress across all subjects, suggests that meeting the needs of G&T children can be achieved without a dedicated policy framework. Simply having a specific policy in place for G&T children does not guarantee successful fulfilment of all their needs.

Finally, upon reviewing the curricula of these schools, the assertion of providing a wide range of opportunities for enrichment activities in all schools is supported by the Ofsted inspection report, which also underscores the presence of an enriched curriculum:

> Children choose from a wide range of stimulating and relevant activities which engage them fully in their learning. The classrooms and the outdoor areas are highly stimulating and organised to enable children to make progress in all areas of learning. (Ofsted inspection report for Littlewood Primary School, 2014)

> Pupils' experience of school is very rich and inspiring because of the wide range of subjects they study. As a result, they have a keen understanding of the world they live in. (Ofsted inspection report for Lakeview Primary School, 2014)

> The wide variety of themes and activities provided by the school ensures that pupils develop skills in a broad range of subjects, and they are well prepared for their next stage of education. (Ofsted inspection report for Lavender Primary School, 2013)

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this case is that the quality of teaching and educational outcomes in primary schools may not be directly correlated with school size. Despite variations in size, all three schools – Littlewood Primary School, Lakeview Primary School, and Lavender Primary School – received positive assessments from Ofsted. This suggests that factors beyond school size, such as curriculum design, implementation, and the quality of teaching staff, may have a more significant impact on the quality of provision. Additionally, the absence of negative assessments and the consistent highlight of exceptional teaching quality across the schools imply a strong emphasis on effective pedagogy. Moreover, the presence of an enriched curriculum and the active collaboration between parents, caregivers, and schools further contribute to the overall positive educational environment. This case highlights that, even in the absence of a dedicated policy for G&T children, schools can effectively meet the educational needs of these students in accordance with Ofsted inspection criteria.

5.3.3.2 Case A

Case A encompasses three schools from an average deprived London borough: Applewood Primary School (2023), Amberley Primary School (2023), and Ashford Primary School (2018). Each school is accompanied by its last Ofsted inspection date. In their most recent assessments, all three schools received a 'Good' rating. They are an above-average sized schools. When examining the latest Ofsted inspection reports for these schools, it was observed that none of the reports made any references to 'most able' or 'more able', terms commonly used by Ofsted to refer G&T children (Ofsted, 2013).

As previously highlighted, the cases within this research were constructed with a focus on the interplay between parental engagement in education and their socio-economic backgrounds, along with the potential effects on children's academic performance. In this regard, the Ofsted reports for Ashford Primary School and Amberley Primary School noted the following observations regarding parental involvement:

> The school's strong connections with parents enable timely support for certain children who require early intervention. (Ofsted inspection report for Ashford Primary School, 2018)

> Leaders collaborate well with parents and carers. (Ofsted inspection report for Amberley Primary School, 2023)

The evaluations mentioned for these two schools suggest a generally favourable level of parental involvement in education across the case, despite the lack of specific assessments regarding parental engagement at Applewood Primary School.

In terms of the evaluation of these schools' curriculum by Ofsted, distinct evaluations emerge:

> A wide range of clubs enables pupils to develop skills and talents beyond the curriculum. Memorable trips and visits engage pupils and help to build their understanding of the world. (Ofsted inspection report for Applewood Primary School, 2023)

Ofsted’s assessment of Applewood Primary School primarily focuses on the overall effectiveness of their enrichment activities, similarly, the inspection report for Amberley Primary School emphasises the positive aspects of the implemented activities within their enriched curriculum.

> Students really enjoy the many extracurricular activities and field trips that are available to them. Sports events and musical performances are examples of enrichment activities that students enjoy. Pupils' interests and abilities are fostered through these well-organised activities. (Ofsted inspection report for Amberley Primary School, 2023)

On the contrary, the Ofsted inspection report for Ashford Primary School focuses on effectiveness of subject-based enrichment activities:

> You have enhanced the school's curriculum visits programme by emphasising new vocabulary and introducing engaging contexts for students' writing. (Ofsted inspection report for Ashford Primary School, 2018)

Further examination of the schools' websites reveals alignment with the Ofsted reports regarding extracurricular activities. At Applewood Primary School, the curriculum enrichment primarily includes Outdoor Learning, Eco Education, Sustainability and field trips. Compared to other schools in this case, Applewood provides relatively fewer extra-curricular opportunities for children. On the other hand, Amberley Primary School received positive evaluations from Ofsted regarding the diversity and effectiveness of its enrichment activities. The school offers an extensive programme of clubs and additional activities, providing opportunities for trips, visits, and performances by theatre groups as part of the curriculum. When it comes to Ashford Primary School, this school also received positive evaluations from Ofsted regarding subject-based enrichment activities. Although there is no specific information about this on the school's website, it does offer various programs such as Morning Club and Afternoon Schools Club, indicating a commitment to providing additional enrichment opportunities for students. Overall, despite variations in approaches, each school demonstrates a commitment to providing students with enriching experiences beyond the standard curriculum, contributing positively to their development.

In examining the Ofsted inspection reports regarding professional development opportunities for teachers, the following evaluations are apparent:

> Teachers deliver the curriculum skilfully. They have strong subject knowledge because they receive excellent training and support. (Ofsted inspection report for Applewood Primary School, 2023)

> You have further developed the consistent teaching of phonics across the school and all staff have had access to professional development in this area. (Ofsted inspection report for Ashford Primary School, 2018)

In summary, the Ofsted inspection reports reveal that Applewood Primary School boasts skilled teachers with strong subject knowledge due to excellent teacher education and support. Ashford Primary School stands out for its commitment to enhancing phonics teaching through consistent development opportunities for all staff. However, Amberley Primary School's report lacks specific evaluation of professional development.

Regarding the assessment of the school policy, it is observed that, in this case, the schools in this case do not have a dedicated policy regarding gifted education. Furthermore, there is an absence of a defined provision list and a corresponding definition in the school's SEND policy about this cohort. This reflects the inclusive approach taken by these schools, which integrates

gifted education into a broader inclusive education framework rather than through a separate policy.

5.3.3.3 Case M

Case M consists of four schools: Maplewood Primary School, Meadowbrook Primary School, Magnolia Primary School, and Mountainview Primary School. These schools are located in one of the most deprived London boroughs. In the 2023 Ofsted inspection, Maplewood Primary School received an 'Outstanding' rating. It is an average-sized school. Meadowbrook Primary School, assessed as 'Good' by Ofsted in the same inspection year, is larger than most primary schools nationally. Magnolia Primary School, which has a higher number of registered students than the national average, received a 'Good' rating in the 2022 Ofsted inspection. Finally, Mountainview Primary School was also evaluated as 'Good' by Ofsted in the 2022 inspection. It is an average-sized school.

Considering that the number of students eligible for free school meal in these schools exceeds the national average and they are situated in some of the most deprived London boroughs, it is reasonable to argue that these two criteria do not directly or negatively impact the quality of education assessed by Ofsted. This is evident as most of these schools were evaluated as 'Good,' and one even received an 'Outstanding' rating in Ofsted inspections. Furthermore, a closer examination of these schools' Ofsted reports reveals that there is no clear link between school size and teaching quality. The evidence from Case M suggests that socio-economic factors and school size are not indicative of the overall quality of education, as determined by Ofsted assessments.

As stressed before, Ofsted uses the terms 'most able' or 'more able' to refer to G&T children, and none of the schools under consideration had undergone such assessments, whether positive or negative (Ofsted, 2013). Considering that these schools were rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' in their most recent Ofsted inspections, this suggests a gap in the assessment process,

potentially overlooking the educational provision and support required for this group of learners.

Considering the relationship between parental involvement in education and their socio-economic backgrounds, along with its potential impact on children's achievements, which influenced the process of case formulation in this research, there is a noteworthy finding in the Ofsted inspection reports regarding this context. Except for Magnolia Primary School, Ofsted reports lack any mention of parental involvement in these schools.

> The parents support the school in its efforts to promote both academic and personal growth in their children, acknowledging the dedication of school leaders and staff in ensuring their children's success. (Ofsted inspection report for Magnolia Primary School, 2022)

Interestingly, despite receiving a 'Good' rating, Magnolia Primary School is praised for its positive parental involvement. Conversely, Maplewood Primary School, which received an 'Outstanding' rating, lacks any evaluation of parental involvement. This indicates that positive feedback on parental involvement in Ofsted reports is not the sole indicator of the quality of provision. Additionally, it suggests that schools located in the most deprived areas, with a high number of eligible students for free school meals, can also demonstrate significant parental involvement according to Ofsted's standards.

As for the evaluation of these schools' curriculum by Ofsted, the following assessments were made:

> The school offers a diverse range of enrichment activities that are valued by students. These activities are carefully designed to allow students to cultivate their skills and interests across various domains. (Ofsted inspection report for Maplewood Primary School, 2023)

> The school's curriculum is comprehensive and ambitious. Students engage in a wide array of subjects, aligned with the national curriculum, which is further enriched to provide a more robust educational experience. (Ofsted inspection report for Meadowbrook Primary School, 2023)

> The curriculum devised by school leaders facilitates successful learning across various subjects for all students. Additionally, a diverse selection of extracurricular clubs is provided, ranging from quidditch and drama to circus skills and eco-club. (Ofsted inspection report for Mountainview Primary School, 2022)

When examining the curricula of these schools, it's evident that, as highlighted by Ofsted, there are various special interest clubs available during lunchtime and after school. For instance, Meadowbrook Primary School offers Music and French, while Magnolia Primary School provides opportunities in Construction, Lego, and Coding. Additionally, Mountainview Primary School offers Drama, Environmental (Eco), and Dodgeball clubs. This diverse range of extracurricular activities, both within the school day and outside regular hours, along with opportunities such as trips, visiting speakers, and participation in various in-school and out-of-school competitions, aligns with the schools' commitment to providing enriching educational experiences for their students.

In light of the Ofsted inspection reports, the final aspect to address is the professional development of teachers:

> Teachers possess extensive subject knowledge from regular, high-quality training and coaching. (Ofsted inspection report for Maplewood Primary School, 2023)
>
> The school prioritises effective training for teachers and considers their workload. (Ofsted inspection report for Meadowbrook Primary School, 2023)
>
> Teachers are highly skilled and knowledgeable, benefitting from a wide array of professional development opportunities provided that they deeply appreciate. (Ofsted inspection report for Magnolia Primary School, 2022)

Considering the observations above, it could be suggested that these schools prioritise the continuous professional growth of their educators.

When examining the policies of these schools, it was evident that none of them have a policy specifically dedicated to these children. Instead, they adhere to an inclusive approach within their Equalities Policy, ensuring that all children have the opportunity to fulfil their potential regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances. This approach aligns with the integration of gifted education within the general education policy in England (Smith, and Casey, 2018).

Taken together, these results suggest that, although these schools are situated in some of London's most deprived boroughs and serve a higher proportion of students eligible for free school meals compared to the national average, they share a common commitment to quality education. This commitment is evident in their positive ratings from Ofsted inspections. While

parental involvement may vary, key elements such as curriculum enrichment, teacher education, and an inclusive approach to gifted education remain steadfast across these schools. Overall, these findings underscore a unified commitment to enhancing teaching quality and fostering equal opportunities for all students.

5.3.3.4 Calypso Primary School

As emphasised, Calypso Primary School has been included in this research as an exemplification of a school from an average deprived London borough. It is an average-sized school. In its 2022 Ofsted inspection, Calypso Primary School was rated 'Good.' When examining this report, it was noted that specific evaluations related to G&T children were not conducted under terms such as 'most able' or 'more able,' as observed in other cases. However, the inspection notably emphasised Calypso Primary School's commitment to high expectations for all students:

> They have high expectations for all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well and become self-confident. (Ofsted inspection report for Calypso Primary School, 2022)

The report further commended the Subject Leaders at Calypso Primary School, underscoring their profound knowledge of respective subjects and their pivotal role in providing expert education to other teachers:

> Subject leaders know their subjects well. They provide the expert training that teachers need to ensure that activities are appropriate to help pupils progress. (Ofsted inspection report for Calypso Primary School, 2022)

This strategic emphasis on expert education serves as a testament to the school's dedication to fostering a learning environment where teachers are equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. Effectively differentiating lessons according to diverse levels of student development necessitates a profound understanding of the subjects being taught (Smets, 2017). The strong focus on expert education for teachers at Calypso Primary School signifies a strategic initiative designed to ensure the delivery of tailored and effective lessons that align with the individual

needs of each student, thereby reinforcing the school's overarching commitment to maintaining high expectations for all.

Furthermore, the evaluation emphasised that the school's enriched curriculum, which extends to both in-school and out-of-school clubs and events, is designed to foster self-esteem and a sense of belonging among the students:

> Leader have made significant changes to the curriculum so that there is an interesting range of subjects and activities on offer…. Pupils develop self-esteem and a sense of belonging through participation in school clubs and events. There is something on offer for all. (Ofsted inspection report for Calypso Primary School, 2022)

The evaluation underlined Calypso Primary School's dedication to offering a well-rounded educational experience beyond academic achievements. This is exemplified by their enriched curriculum and diverse range of in-school and out-of-school clubs and events, fostering self-esteem and a sense of belonging among students.

Regarding the evaluation of the school policy, it is noted that there is no specific policy dedicated to gifted education at Calypso Primary School. Additionally, the school's SEND policy does not specifically highlight any definition and a list of actions for provisions for this cohort. This reflects Calypso Primary School's inclusive approach, integrating gifted education within an inclusive education framework, rather than through a separate and dedicated policy. However, in my conversation with John, the headteacher, he stated that within the inclusive education framework, the school has been developing a specific section for G&T children:

> Currently, there are no specific national or Local Authority (LA) policies guiding the education of gifted and talented students in our school. However, we are in the process of defining our own school policy to address the needs of these students. It is crucial for our school to have a clear definition and understanding of how to cater to the needs of gifted and talented students within our unique context. (John)

He highlighted their efforts in working on an inclusive education policy that explores areas such as definition of terms, identification methods, and optimising existing provisions for G&T children. This underscores the school's commitment to overcoming obstacles and continuously improving their approach to provide comprehensive support and resources for G&T children within the broader inclusive education context. This can be seen as a reflection of the decentralisation of services for G&T children, where gifted education is integrated into the broader framework of general education policy. Consequently, the school-led approach to G&T

children emerges, with the school's proactive initiatives in supporting this cohort exemplifying the varying provisions for G&T children across different schools (Eyre, 2009).

In summary, Calypso Primary School, while lacking specific evaluations and dedicated provisions for G&T children, adopts an inclusive education approach. The school's commitment to high expectations for all students, subject leadership, and strategic expert education initiatives reflect its dedication to providing tailored and effective lessons that address diverse student needs. The enriched curriculum, featuring various in-school and out-of-school activities, emphasises the school's holistic and student-centred educational philosophy.

The analysis in this chapter begins with an introduction to the distinct cases, each assigned a brief abbreviation (see 'Cases selection' section for a more detailed explanation of how these cases were constructed). While 'Case A' represents schools in the average deprived London boroughs; 'Case M' consists of the schools from the most deprived boroughs, and 'Case L' represents schools from the least deprived boroughs. Following the presentation of these cases, an exemplification of the average deprived borough case is provided through Calypso Primary School. Derived from interviews with four classroom teachers and a headteacher, this example showcases a case believed to be least affected by potential variables that may impact the quality of provision, either positively or negatively. It is essential to reiterate that the school and teacher names mentioned in the cases are pseudonyms, as previously stated. This precautionary measure is taken to ensure the confidentiality of actual school identities and to safeguard the privacy of educators throughout the discussions.

5.4 Methods

5.4.1 Sampling

In any research project, investigating the problem in the whole population is often considered the best strategy to achieve research objectives. This type of inquiry necessitates a great deal of time, money and energy. In practice, researchers may not have enough time or resources to collect data from the entire population. Thus, it is always not possible and practical to study the whole population (Marshall, 1996; Taherdoost, 2016). Therefore, researchers typically focus on the subset of the population, which is known as the sample. Researchers use the data collected from samples to make a generalisation about the entire population. This approach allows researchers to reduce the cost and workload associated with research (Acharya, Prakash, Saxena and Nigam, 2013).

The process by which the sample is selected from a given population is called the sample design. In any research, sample selection plays a critical role in the overall research process (Thompson, 2012). Leedy and Ormrod (2015) have indicated that "the sample should be so carefully chosen that, through it, the researcher is able to see characteristics of the total population in the same proportions and relationships that they would be seen if the researcher were, in fact, to examine the total population." (p.177) In this context, there are two main methods of sampling: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Sampling differs depending on whether the study is quantitative or qualitative (Acharya *et al*., 2013). The primary distinguishing factor regarding the choice of sampling between qualitative and quantitative research is the issue of generalisability. While researchers widely use non-probability sampling for qualitative inquiry, probability sampling is used to pick a sample for quantitative research to statically generalise the findings to the whole population (Maruster and Maarten, 2013; Berndt, 2020).

In a probability sample, researchers choose the sample from the population using a method grounded on the principle that every member of the population has a known and equal chance of being selected. There are four main types of probability samples: the simple random

sampling; the systematic sampling; the stratified random sampling; and the multi-stage cluster sampling. All these probability sampling methods employ a random selection process that minimises the risk of systematic bias. It enables us to have a sample that is highly representative of the population (Bryman, 2012; Acharya *et al*., 2013).

In this section, I briefly explained sample, sample design and the main method of sampling respectively. Later, more details will be provided regarding sampling method used in this qualitative case study.

5.4.1.1 Approach to sampling in this research

The aim of qualitative research and case study research design is to gain insight into the real-life phenomenon rather than analytically generalising the findings to the whole population. Sample design in qualitative research necessitates a clear rationale to decide which elements are included or excluded in the sample (Yin, 2009). As Bickman and Rog (2008) have stressed that "Nonprobability samples allow human judgments, either purposefully or unintentionally, to influence which individuals or units are selected for a study." (p.78) Thus, non-probability sampling techniques are widely associated with case study research design and qualitative research to target a particular group of population (Marshall, 1996; Higginbottom, 2004). As delineated by Maruster and Maarten (2013) "The sample is not intended to be statically representative: the chances of selection for each element are unknown but, instead, the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection. It is the feature that makes them well suited to small-scale, in-depth studies." (p.80)

Purposive sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, has been selected as a sampling method for this research. To effectively employ purposive sampling in any qualitative study, researchers should decide who or what will be sampled, how many people and area of the study will be sampled and what form of sampling will take. In this strategy, researchers rely on their judgement to purposely choose settings, persons or activities to provide information that is

particularly relevant to research questions and goals (Maxwell, 2012; Creswell and Poth, 2016). Campbell, Greenwood, Prior, Shearer, Walkem, Young, Bywaters and Walker, (2020) have emphasised that "The reasons for adopting a purposive strategy are based on the assumption that, given the aims and objectives of the study, specific kinds of people may hold different and important views about the ideas and issues at the question and therefore need to be included in the sample." (p. 654) In this way, it is aimed to find information-rich cases in depth in accordance with the objective of the inquiry. There are different types of purposive sampling strategies such as snowball sampling, maximum variation sampling, intensity sampling, typical case sampling and stratified sampling (Patton, 2002).

This research specifically concentrates on the views and practices of classroom teachers regarding G&T children in state primary schools that do not have admission criteria related to students' abilities or achievements. Therefore, purposive sampling has been chosen as the sampling method for this research. Due to the challenges, I faced in accessing the schools during the post-COVID period in London, I decided to utilise a type of purposive sampling strategy known as snowball sampling (for further insights, visit 'Challenges of data collection in the post-COVID period' section). The utilisation of this approach facilitated my access to the population that is considered 'hard to reach' for my research, consisting of teachers working in state primary schools in London without admission criteria, through my social network. By utilising snowball sampling, the process of finding participants proceeded as follows: after initially contacting a small number of teachers through my social network and requested them to recommend other contacts who meet the research criteria and who might also have been interested in participating, my data collection process continued in this manner (Parker, Scott, and Geddes, 2019). As a result of this process, a total of fifteen participants contributed to my research: ten teachers from ten different state primary schools, along with four teachers and one headteacher from another state primary school, included as an exemplification of a case.

5.4.2 Data collection methods

Data collection is a systematic process by which empirical data is generated and collected through several different data sources. There are three major methods of data collection: asking

questions (interview), observing events (observation), and reading documents (documents). These data collection methods allow the researcher to gather data to address research questions. According to the source of data, the data collected through data collection methods mentioned is divided into two broad categories as primary and secondary data. The data collected by asking questions or observing events is based on the process to collect data from informants, which is called primary data. Secondary data refers to data that has already been collected by someone else for another primary purpose. Researchers must decide which sort of data needed to achieve their research objectives and accordingly they will have to employ methods of data collection. While researchers may solely rely on one type of data collection method such as observation and documents, they can use multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997; Bassey, 1999; Kothari, 2004; Denzin, 2012; Johnston, 2017; Grix, 2019). The main data collection tools employed in this research are interviews and documents. In the following sections, I will explain each data collection method and the way how I utilised these instruments to reach the objectives of my research.

5.4.2.1 Interviews

The interview, as a research method for data collection, refers to the professional interaction involving the careful questioning and listening process between interviewer and interviewee about a theme of common interest to gain knowledge. It enables researchers to access case participants' point of view, interpretation of actions and events (Darke, Shanks and Broadbent, 1998; Kvale, 2012). However, the use of interviews for data collection brings some disadvantages. An interview can be time-consuming and expensive for researcher and interviewee. Also, it may cause a bias on both sides due to differences or similarities with respect to gender, age, social background etc. and provide less anonymity (Salazar, 1990; Brown, 2001). Yin has regarded interviews as essential sources of evidence for case study research (Yin, 2009). Interviews can vary according to their structure, number of participants in each interview, media and interviewer's style.

Based on the degree of structuring, three broad types of interview techniques can be classified as 1) the unstructured interview 2) the structured interview 3) the semi-structured interview (Brinkmann, 2014). The main difference among types mentioned above is related to the degree of power possessed by the interviewer. To be more precise, the structured interview is fully controlled by the interviewer, who asks all interviewees to respond to the same set of predefined questions with a fixed set of response categories. Due to the nature of the structured interview, it gives little flexibility for questions asked and answered that requires a strict adherence to the sequence of questions and question wording. Structured interviews are commonly used in quantitative research. It is used to minimise interviewer bias and to achieve the highest degree of objectivity within the research process (Fontana and Frey, 2005; Sarantakos, 2013; Baskarada, 2014**;** Adhabi and Anozie, 2017).

When it comes to unstructured interviewing, Punch (2013) has described unstructured interview "as a way of understanding the complex behaviour of people without imposing any a priori categorisation which might limit the field of inquiry." (p.224) It is also called informal conversational interview, in-depth interview, non-standardised interview and ethnographic interview. It employs unstructured questionnaires consisting of the number of open-ended questions that arise spontaneously in a free-flowing conversation. This kind of interview provides for a great amount of flexibility and freedom for both interviewee and interviewer related to planning, implementing, and organising the interview content and questions. It usually starts with a specific open-ended question or topic, allowing for changes in the order and wording of the questions. As stressed Baskarada (2014) that "The experience of an interviewer with regard to technique and subject matter expertise is a key factor in identifying and maximising the collection of relevant information. It is recommended interviewers mainly use probe questions, which start with 'How...?' and cannot be answered with a 'yes' or a 'no,' in unstructured interviews." (p.12) Due to variation in the question asked, researchers may not be able to utilise data to make cross-participant comparisons that is one of the major disadvantages of unstructured interviewing (Gubrium and Holstein, 2002; Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009; Aborisade, 2013).

In terms of the semi-structured interview, it falls between structured and unstructured interviews that which incorporates elements from both. Like a structured interview, the interviewer uses the same set of predetermined questions about a particular topic. However, it differs from structured one with respect to interviewers' power to probe more information after

the question is answered. Thus, it enables two-way communication between interviewer and interviewee that helps to collect in-depth information (Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush, 2006; Whiting, 2008; Brinkmann, 2014).

To collect data from teachers working in state primary schools, I opted for online semi-structured interviews (see 'Appendix 7'). This method not only allows me to address the research themes within a structured framework while maintaining flexibility but also facilitates data collection across two geographically distant countries. As outlined in 'Appendix 8', the interview questions are organised into nine distinct, color-coded themes. Some themes explore the conceptualisation of key terms, while others examine awareness and knowledge of relevant legislation and statutory practices, as well as curriculum practices. Additionally, Appendix 10 provides an indicative interview transcript with a teacher as an example.

5.4.2.2 Documents

Documents refers to various secondary data sets, which range from public through to personal. While letters, diaries and memoirs could be examples of personal documents, public documents as a data set being examined in this research can be any records of governmental publications such as ministerial or departmental annual reports (Sapsford and Jupp, 1996: Vartanian, 2010). As Hox and Hennie (2005) emphasised that "For some social research questions, it is possible to use collected data earlier by other researchers or for other purposes than research such as official statistics, administrative records, or other accounts routinely by organisations. By virtue of being archived and made available, any type of primary data can serve as secondary data." (p.596) The leading exponents in the social sciences of case study also stresses the applicability of documents to qualitative case study as a data collection method due to its potential to discover the insight related to research phenomena (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1994; Stake, 1995).

Using existing documents save time and cost of data collection. Documents can be employed by researchers as a method of data collection for a wide range of purposes. Based on the

function of documents within the research process, Bowen (2009) underlined the five common usage of documents. First, documents can be used to obtain background information as well as historical insight to understand the context within which research participants operate. Second, documents can shed light on the need for unasked questions or unplanned actions during the research process and it can enable the researcher to take action in this direction. Third, documents serve as supplementary data, providing researchers with a clearer picture of the phenomena under investigation. Fourth, documents help researchers to track the change and developments related to research topics. Fifth, documents can be used to verify research findings. Based on this comparison, if research findings conflict with the documents, it can guide the researcher to investigate further (Bowen, 2009).

However, using documents as a data collection method has some limitations as well. Because this data is produced for different purposes, it can be difficult to find documents that provide the necessary information to answer research questions. Besides, reliability of the data is another problem that researchers should be concerned with whether the data meet the criteria of good scientific practice or not. Another issue is that documents have been constructed by others' 'organisations', or governments' perspective on the issues, which could bring a risk to constructing research on subjective data. When choosing and utilising these documents, researchers should be as careful and selective as possible and should not regard documents as accurate and complete recording of events (McCulloch, 2004; Hox and Hennie, 2005; Bowen, 2009).

In my initial research plan, it was planned to use documents as a way of data collection to serve two main purposes. Initially, I intended to utilise documents to identify research sites and potential cases that could shed light on the research questions (for further insights, revisit 'Cases selection' section). After selecting the cases, I planned to collect primary data from both countries. This primary data would then be complemented by an in-depth analysis of local, national, and institutional policy documents and curricula. This combined approach aimed to enrich the primary data analysis with insights derived from the analysed documents, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. However, due to unforeseen challenges in obtaining research permissions in Türkiye, I was compelled to adapt my methodology. Documents subsequently became the primary data collection method for the Turkish case. To gain insights into this 'hard to reach' case, I relied on existing literature exploring teachers' views and practices related to gifted education in Türkiye. Through a

'purposive literature review', I systematically identified studies aligned with the aims of the research and capable of informing the inquiry within the Turkish context. This will be discussed in detail in the next section.

As the third application, the documents were used to enhance the meaningfulness of the primary data collected in England, in line with my initial plan. This involved analysing documents such as school policies, Ofsted reports, and school curricula to provide additional context and insights to complement the primary data the selection of documents and the method of their analysis will be detailed in the 'Data analysis' section.

In summary, the documents serve three key purposes in this research: selecting research sites, acting as the primary data source for the Türkiye part of this research, and enhancing the meaningfulness of primary data collected in England.

5.4.2.3 Purposive literature review

A literature review is a systematic process of identifying, evaluating, and synthesising existing research on a particular topic. Different methodologies can be employed in conducting literature reviews, resulting in various types, such as narrative or integrative reviews, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses. The most suitable approach for a literature review depends on the research question and its purpose (Snyder, 2019). A systematic literature (SRs) review is a carefully organised evaluation designed to address specific research questions by employing a structured and clear methodology for identifying, selecting, and critically assessing the findings of the studies included. In contrast with traditional literature review that depend primarily on the authors' judgement, these reviews are considered original research because they adhere to rigorous methodological criteria to make it more transparent, replicable and less biased (Rother, 2007; Lame, 2019).

Systematic literature reviews, while rigorous, require a focused research question and may not be feasible for all projects especially considering the lack of commissioned literature reviews on this specific topic within Türkiye. Besides, a systematic literature review usually involves multiple reviewers who select studies that meet the inclusion criteria, assess the articles, extract the data, analyse and present results to ensure reliability and objectivity (Lame, 2019). However, since this research is part of my PhD and must be conducted independently, the approach I refer to as a 'Purposive literature review' differs from the systematic literature review in this respect. Thus, in this research, the fundamental principles of systematic literature reviews were utilised to conduct what I have termed a 'Purposive literature review', specifically designed to address the research questions in the context of the challenges faced in Türkiye due to difficulties in data collection (for more detailed information, revisit 'Challenges of data collection in post-COVID period' section). Throughout this section, I will explain how I conducted the 'Purposive Literature Review,' primarily adhering to the principles of systematic literature reviews.

Throughout the process of conducting a systematic literature review, it must be made clear what the topic or issue under examination is. A properly carried out systematic review should be specific in its aim; it should look at only those published papers which provide evidence on this subject or these questions (Linnenluecke, Marrone and Singh, 2020). The research questions I aimed to address through the purposive literature review are as follows:

1. How do primary school teachers understand the term G&T and consider their role in the identification and provision for G&T pupils in Türkiye?
2. How do primary school teachers interpret, and apply national, local, or institutional G&T policy within Türkiye?
3. What challenges do primary school teachers face while implementing G&T policies and provision and what steps do they take to overcome them in Türkiye?

To conduct purposive literature review, I followed these fundamental principles of a systematic literature review: I first conducted a scoping search to address mentioned three primary objectives of this research and to determine whether a systematic review on the same topic had already been conducted (MacMillan, McBride, George and Steiner, 2019).

To conduct the scoping search, three primary academic sources were utilised: Google Scholar, offering extensive access to English-language publications on gifted education in Türkiye; DergiPark, for retrieving articles from Turkish academic journals; and the National Thesis Centre, to identify relevant master's and doctoral theses, with acknowledged limitations regarding the use of these sources. While the limitations of Google Scholar, particularly concerning peer-review quality and indexing consistency, are acknowledged, it was intentionally selected due to its accessibility and wide academic reach. Google Scholar provides access to a broad range of international publications and is widely used by the global academic community, as well as by scholars in Türkiye (Teixeira da Silva, 2018; Işık, 2021).

DergiPark, on the other hand, was selected because it hosts the largest collection of academic journals in Türkiye and serves as an open-access platform that includes peer-reviewed journals across various disciplines. Its comprehensive coverage of national academic output made it a valuable resource for identifying relevant Turkish-language studies in the field of gifted education (TÜBİTAK ULAKBİM, 2019).

In addition, although the inclusion of master's dissertations and doctoral theses may raise concerns regarding consistency in academic rigour, the selected theses were produced at some of the most prestigious and widely preferred universities in Türkiye, including state-supported institutions and a leading private university recognised for its academic excellence. All theses had undergone rigorous academic supervision and institutional review processes, ensuring an acceptable level of scholarly credibility for inclusion in this research. These sources, together with the databases outlined above, formed the foundation for identifying relevant literature.

Next, to refine my keyword search for the scoping review, I employed terms like 'gifted and talented,' 'primary school,' 'primary school teacher,' 'gifted education,' and 'state primary schools,' along with their Turkish equivalents when searching English resources on Google Scholar and Turkish sources on DergiPark and the National Thesis Centre. Given the limited availability of studies addressing views and practices of primary school teachers working in state primary schools regarding G&T children, I could not conduct a scoping search by relying solely on reviewing abstracts or conclusions. This experience underscores a common issue in systematic literature reviews: the difficulty of abstract screening, especially in design research, due to unstructured abstracts and unclear titles (Lame, 2019).

Later, I decided to use a more comprehensive keyword search, employing potential synonyms for key terms such as 'gifted education' and 'gifted and talented,' along with geographical terms like 'Türkiye' and 'Turkey,' by utilising the Google Scholar database to access English-language resources. For Turkish-language sources, I searched through DergiPark and the National Thesis Centre using keywords such as 'özel yetenek,' 'üstün zeka,' and 'üstün yetenek', which all could be synonymous with 'gifted and talented.' My search yielded 113369 results on DergiPark, 964 on Google Scholar, and 939 from the National Thesis Centre. Next, I utilised 1990 as a reference point, given that this year marks the beginning of the current framework of gifted education in Türkiye and included articles published from this date up to the present in the search scope. Following this, I focused my search on peer-reviewed articles from DergiPark and Google Scholar, known for their trusted form of scientific communication. However, I did not impose any restrictions on using master's and doctoral theses found in the National Thesis Centre, as these theses have undergone rigorous evaluation by academic advisors and meet the academic standards of their respective universities.

Selection bias in systematic reviews can occur when inclusion and exclusion criteria are not clearly defined or are overly restrictive. This can lead to a biased selection of studies, potentially impacting the overall results and conclusions of the review (Nightingale, 2009). Thus, to ensure a focused and manageable review, inclusion and exclusion criteria mentioned below were developed to systematically categorise and select relevant studies. These criteria were designed to guarantee clear classification, consistent interpretation, and a practical scope for the review. The inclusion and exclusion criteria I specified are as follows:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Includes master's theses, doctoral dissertations, journal articles, conference papers and books employing qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research designs.
- Research that explicitly examines primary school teachers' views and practices regarding G&T children in state primary schools, or research that distinguish between primary school teacher working in state primary school and teachers from other educational levels or private school when reporting data based on the type of school they work in in Türkiye.
- Research published after 1990.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Research not focused on education of G&T children in Türkiye.
- Research not published in English or Turkish.
- Papers without full text available.
- Non-peer-reviewed articles.
- Articles that did not match the inclusion criteria.

The selected studies that meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria to address the research questions are presented in the table below. The article selection process prioritised methodological diversity and academic credibility. Studies employing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods were included, with sample sizes ranging from eight to over 2,000 participants. Research was selected based on its relevance to the topic and its scholarly rigour, either through recognised academic publication or completion at Türkiye's leading universities under rigorous academic supervision. By acknowledging the methodological differences and potential limitations across the included studies, the review sought to synthesise a wide range of perspectives while upholding standards of academic rigour. In this regard, the studies listed in the table below were sent to three researchers working in gifted education, along with the research purpose (see 'Appendix 4') and the questions addressed in the conducted purposive literature review (see 'Appendix 7'). This was done to ensure that no study was overlooked, thus increasing the trustworthiness of the conducted purposive literature review. The criteria sought for the researchers to collaborate in this process are as follows:

- Graduating from a teacher education programme in Türkiye related to gifted education.
- Having teaching experience with G&T children.
- Completing or currently pursuing PhD degree in the field of gifted education, either in Türkiye or abroad.

Table 4: List of selected studies for analysis

Researcher & Publication Date	Assigned Reference Number in this Text	Subject	Participant Number	Method
Şirin, E. 2021	Reference 1	Teachers' perceptions of G&T children	541	Mixed/ Survey

Bildiren, A. 2018	Reference 2	Opinions of primary school teachers on the definition, identification and education of gifted children	13	Qualitative/ Phenomenology
Alkan, A. Karataş, S. and Ataman, A. 2013	Reference 3	Development and Evaluation of Educational Software for Identifying Gifted/Talented Students for Teachers	8	Quantitative/ Semi-structured Interview with Survey
Gökdere, S. and Ayvacı, H. 2004	Reference 4	Determining the knowledge levels of classroom teachers regarding G&T children and their characteristics	55	Mixed/ Semi-structured Interview with Survey
Sürmeli, V. 2015	Reference 5	The level of awareness of classroom teachers regarding gifted students	298	Quantitative & Survey
Kalıncı, A. 2021	Reference 6	Opinions and suggestions of school components on individualised education programmes in the education of gifted students	26	Qualitative/ Semi-structured Interview
Akar, İ. and Akar, Ş. 2012	Reference 7	Primary school in-service teachers' perceptions of giftedness	155	Qualitative/ Open-ended Questionnaire
Erol, M. Gedik, O. and Demirtaş, B. 2023	Reference 8	Primary school teachers' experiences in the identification of gifted students and nominating them to science and art centres	15	Qualitative/ Phenomenology
Görgülü, D. 2023	Reference 9	Investigation of the opinions of classroom teachers who have gifted students in their class about science and art centres	16	Qualitative/ Semi-structured Interview
Girgin, N. Atasayar, M. and Canlı, F. 2023	Reference 10	Teachers' perceptions, opinions and training needs about the guidance, diagnosis and education of individuals with special talents	358	Quantitative/ Survey
Girgin, D. 2020	Reference 11	Competencies required for supporting gifted students: classroom teachers' views	28	Qualitative/ Semi-structured Interview
Sözel, H. 2019	Reference 12	Evaluation of teachers' instructional attitudes of talented individuals	92	Quantitative/ Survey
Güneş, A. 2015	Reference 13	An investigation of classroom teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy regarding the education of gifted students	19	Quantitative/ Survey
Kaya, N. 2019	Reference 14	Determination of attitudes and opinions of classroom teachers about education of gifted students	220	Mixed/ Semi-structured Interview with Survey

Abanoz, S. 2021	Reference 15	A comparison of the self-efficacy and attitudes towards gifted education between classroom teachers who have gifted students and those who do not	386	Quantitative/ Survey
Duymaz, S. 2019	Reference 16	Classroom teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy towards the education of G&T students	464	Quantitative/ Survey
Şahin, F. and Levent, F. 2015	Reference 17	Examining the methods and strategies which classroom teachers use in the education of gifted students	177	Mixed/ Semi-structured Interview with Survey
Sönmez, D. 2017	Reference 18	Defining the Primary School Teacher Attitudes Towards Gifted Students and Their Education (Sample of Silifke District)	20	Quantitative/ Survey
Abu, N. Akkanat, Ç. and Gökdere, M. 2017	Reference 19	Teachers' views about the education of gifted students in regular classrooms	10	Qualitative/ Semi-structured Interview
Opengin, E. and Gurgur, H. 2021	Reference 20	How should a resource room programme for gifted students be integrated into school system?	105	Qualitative/ Action Research with Semi-structured interview and focus group discussions
Öpengin, E. 2021	Reference 21	Investigating stakeholder opinions on a resource room program for gifted students	33	Qualitative/ Case Study with Semi-structured Interview
Gökdemir, S. 2017	Reference 22	The evaluation of gifted student's diagnostic process according to teacher, parents and student's ideas in our country	228	Qualitative/ Case Study with Structured Interview
Sahin. F. 2012	Reference 23	The effectiveness of training programme for elementary teachers in order to enhance knowledge level about talented students and characteristics of talented students	2160	Quantitative/ The Randomised Pretest–Posttest Control Group with Survey
Şentürk, Ş. Kefeli, İ. and Bircan, M. 2022	Reference 24	Assessment of in-service training programme of support education room awareness course for gifted and talented students organised for classroom teachers	34	Quantitative/ Pretest–Posttest Control Group with Survey

The article selection process prioritised methodological diversity and academic credibility. Studies employing qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods were included, with sample

sizes ranging from eight to over 2,000 participants. Research was selected based on its relevance to the topic and its scholarly rigour, either through recognised academic publication or completion at Türkiye's leading universities under rigours academic supervision. By acknowledging the methodological differences and potential limitations across the included studies, the review sought to synthesise a wide range of perspectives while upholding standards of academic rigour. To reduce the risk of translation errors and ensure accurate and reliable translation of concepts and terms in the analysis of Turkish sources, assistance was sought from another researcher. The criteria sought for the researcher to collaborate in this process are as follows:

- Holding a PhD degree.
- Completing education up to the undergraduate level in Türkiye.
- Obtaining master's and PhD degrees from an English-taught programme outside of Türkiye.

It is important to reiterate that the roles of the collaborating researchers in this research are as follows: To ensure that the translated texts and concepts from Turkish into English are accurately translated; to identify if there are any other studies that meet the exclusion and inclusion criteria, aside from the selected studies indicated in the table. They were not involved in data analysis or in decisions regarding which studies to include or exclude.

The studies selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria mentioned 'Table 4' will first be applied to the themes identified from the analysis of primary data collected in England. Then, the data will be analysed through deductive content analysis, which will be explained in detail in the next section.

5.4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis is an integral component of the research process, and the approach differs depending on whether the data and research approach are primarily quantitative or qualitative

(Bernard, 2014). As mentioned before, this research embodies a multiple case study design with a descriptive nature as a type of qualitative methodology. In this research, two data analysis methods were used: content analysis for secondary data and thematic analysis for primary data. Content analysis and thematic analysis fall within the category of qualitative descriptive design (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen and Snelgrove, 2016). Thus, the selection of data analysis method is based on its capacity to efficiently analyse the data collected, aligning with the descriptive nature of my research. In this section, I will explain what these methods are and how they were used to analyse the data.

To start with thematic analysis, as Braun and Clarke have stressed that "it is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data " (p. 79). Finding patterns is a deliberate process where themes are built through the interaction of the researcher's theoretical framework, discipline-specific knowledge, and research skills with the data (Smith, 2015). The process of theme identification relies on coding. Data coding entails identifying repetitive patterns within the dataset. Next, these patterns are systematically classified to enhance comprehension of the intricate details inherent in the data. This process of systematic categorisation involves assigning precise labels to distinguish different aspects of the content, which helps in conducting a well-structured and organised analysis (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Saldaña, 2009). A theme can be used to describe, organise potential observations, or interpret different aspects of a phenomenon. Themes can emerge through an inductive process, originating from the raw data, or they can be deduced based on existing theories and prior research (Boyatzis, 1998). Thus, as Saldana (2009) has emphasised that "A theme is an outcome of coding, categorisation, and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself, coded." (p.13)

There are two forms of coding: semantic and latent perspectives. Data interpretation at the surface level is the focus of semantic coding with the emphasis on explicitly stated elements. On the other hand, latent coding explores deeper to unveil latent meanings, which include frameworks, assumptions, and worldviews that provide support for the semantic interpretations associated with the research inquiry (Smith, 2015).

This research employed an inductive thematic analysis approach, utilising both semantic and latent coding. To identify themes, I reviewed the primary data, searching for commonalities and distinctions within the codes. This process involved assigning meaningful labels to specific data segments, ultimately facilitating the clustering of similar codes. Next, I subjected the

clustered codes to a process referred to as 'central organising concepts' (Smith, 2015). The aim here was to determine candidate themes, which were those that met the criteria of identifying a cohesive element within the data and providing valuable insights relevant to the research question. Following this, I established the relationships among the emerging candidate themes, identified candidate subthemes, and defined the boundaries for each one, visually demonstrating this through a 'thematic map' (Kiger and Varpio, 2020). Subsequently, I initiated a two-stage review of the candidate themes. The first stage of the review centred on the individual themes, verifying their alignment with the coded data. If I encountered instances where I believed a candidate theme was not a good fit with the meanings evident in the coded data, I revisited coded data and reevaluated the candidate themes. Once I was confident that there were no issues, I proceeded to the second stage. Throughout this stage, I assessed the extent to which the individual themes and the overall analysis accurately portrayed the essential meanings and patterns in the data, allowing me to address my research question. The aim was to reassess the coding process, both in a top-down and bottom-up manner, prior to developing my themes. At the end of this process, I elucidated the thematic map and finalised the theme names, providing descriptive explanations for the content and scope of each theme. Following that, I conducted within-case and cross-case analyses (Smith, 2015).

When it comes to content analysis, researchers systematically analyse textual data to identify themes, akin to thematic analysis. Both approaches can be used with either inductive or deductive methods (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, and Snelgrove, 2016). While data analysis approaches can vary, the core principle of all content analysis methods remains the same: organising large bodies of text into more manageable categories (Elo and Kyngäs 2008). A deductive approach to content analysis typically involves applying predefined codes derived from existing literature, theoretical frameworks, or prior assumptions to guide the analysis of data (Armat, Assarroudi and Rad, 2018). In this research, a deductive content analysis approach was employed which served a dual purpose.

Firstly, it was employed to enrich the analysis of primary data collected on schools in England. Specifically, a deductive content analysis of school websites and Ofsted reports was guided by the following identified key concepts and variables:

1. School policy: School websites were examined to determine if they had dedicated policies targeting G&T children. Additionally, any mentions within inclusive education policies were

scrutinised to gain a comprehensive understanding of the schools' overall policy stance regarding G&T students.

2. Extracurricular activities: School websites were scoured to identify the extracurricular activities offered. This analysis aimed to pinpoint opportunities that could nurture the talents and interests of G&T children, fostering their overall development.

3. Ofsted reports: Recent Ofsted reports were analysed, paying attention to key aspects listed below:

- Student enrolment
- Overall school ratings
- The assessment of provision for G&T children and the terminology used in their evaluations.
- Evaluation of collaboration between parents, caregivers and the school.
- Assessment of extracurricular activities.
- Evaluation of professional development opportunities.

In this data analysis process, several steps were undertaken: Firstly, coding involved identifying and labelling data relevant to predetermined sources. This encompassed extracting information from school websites and Ofsted reports related to key concepts and variables mentioned above. Following coding, the sorted data were organised by assigned codes, facilitating the grouping of similar information within each category. This structured approach aided in synthesising and interpreting the vast array of collected data. While the focus remained on predetermined categories, attention was also given to potentially relevant emerging themes or data points. These were highlighted for further scrutiny and analysis. Subsequently, the highlighted data underwent deeper analysis to discern its significance for gifted education. This involved identifying patterns, trends, and implications within the highlighted information (Humble and Mozelius, 2022). Finally, insights derived from the conducted deductive content analysis were presented in the 'Description of case' section.

Secondly, a deductive content analysis was employed to analyse secondary data identified through the conducted purposive literature review in Türkiye (for further insights, revisit 'Purposive literature review' section). I continued to use a deductive approach, where the themes identified from the analysis of primary data collected in England served as fundamental

concepts guiding the analysis process. Following the same methodology outlined previously, the findings pertaining to Türkiye were presented in "Chapter 7: Türkiye-presentation of findings."

In recent years, the field of data analysis has undergone a profound transformation due to software and technological advancements. This evolution is of particular significance to qualitative research, given its substantial reliance on extensive textual data (Bazeley, 2013). Consequently, there are two main methods for analysing this data: manual analysis and the utilisation of software programmes, known as Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) (Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). Qualitative data analysis software offers several advantages, including automation of manual tasks, timesaving, efficient handling of large datasets, and increased flexibility (John and Johnson, 2000). While software can help organise materials for easy retrieval and synthesis, its ability to handle the dynamic and creative emergence of thematic ideas during the data analysis process may be somewhat restricted (Welsh, 2002; Smith, 2015). Considering the specific nature of this case study, which involves a limited sample size, the data was analysed manually. This manual approach is preferred as it allows for a more in-depth examination using thematic and deductive content analysis methods, ensuring a thorough exploration of the data to generate meaningful codes and themes.

In this chapter, I have outlined the methodological approaches employed in this research and explained how they were applied. The table below provides a concise summary of each method along with its specific purpose within this research.

Table 5: Overview of methodological approaches used in this research

Comparative research	To examine how gifted education, as a specific component of the broader education systems, has been formulated and implemented in two different national contexts, namely England and Türkiye.
Case study	To explore teachers' views and practices on G&T students within their school contexts, considering socioeconomic background, institutional practices, and contextual influences.
Documents	To identify the research site in England, acting as the primary data source in Türkiye,

	and to support the interpretation of data collected in England.
Interview	To collect primary data from primary school teachers in England regarding their views and practices related to gifted and talented children.
Purposive literature review	To identify relevant studies addressing teachers' views and practices related to gifted education in Türkiye.
Thematic analysis	To identify key patterns and themes related to teachers' views and practices concerning gifted and talented students, thematic analysis was applied to the data collected from teachers in England.
Deductive content analysis	It was used both to enrich the analysis of primary data collected from schools in England, such as analysing school websites and Ofsted reports, and to examine relevant studies identified through a purposive literature review in Türkiye, informed by the thematic analysis of the English data.
Cross-case analysis	To identify similarities and differences among the cases primarily formed based on educational and socio-economic disadvantage in England, and to compare the findings between England and Türkiye.
Within-case analysis	To examine each case formed in England within its specific context, to understand the unique factors and practices in that case.

5.4.4 Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of combination of multiple methods or data sources in the research of social phenomena. As emphasised, the case study allows the researcher to use as many resources as possible thus case study is also known as a triangulated research strategy (Carter Bryant-Lukosius, DiCenso, Blythe and Neville, 2014). Patton indicated (1999, p.1192) "The logic of triangulation is based on the premise that no single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival explanations. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical

reality, multiple methods of data collection and analysis provide more grist for the research mil." (p.1192)

Denzin (1978) identified four basic types of triangulations: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation. In data triangulation, researchers can use multiple data sources, which vary through time, when data is collected, space and the person from whom data come. Investigator triangulation involves more than one observer, interviewer, coder or data analysis within the research process. Theory triangulation comprises the use of multiple theories or hypotheses rather than a single one to investigate a research phenomenon. Methodological triangulation refers to the use of multiple methodologies and methods to approach the same research phenomenon, and it consists of 'between-method triangulation' and 'within-method triangulation.' The former employs the application of both qualitative and quantitative methods such as the use of observation with questionnaires in the same research. The latter involves the use of one methodological approach (qualitative or quantitative) along with different methods to investigate research phenomena. An example is the use of observation and interview to collect data in qualitative research (Denzin 1978; Patton, 1999). Each type of triangulation mentioned above brings an advantage including uncovering the deviant dimension of research phenomenon, revealing unique research findings, synthesis or integration of theories and increasing researchers' confidence regarding research findings (Jick, 1979).

This research has been grounded on 'within-method triangulation' by employing more than one type of data collection method. As Merriam and Tisdell have stressed (2016) that "What someone tells you in an interview can be checked against what you observe on site or what you read about in documents." (p. 245) In this regard, I will use both semi-structured interviews and documents to obtain a comprehensive view of how schools and teachers approach gifted education.

5.4.5 Ethical considerations

Any research involving the process of collecting data from human beings may pose a wide range of risks for participants, such as invasion of privacy, loss of confidentiality, psychological trauma, indirect physical harm, embarrassment, and stigma (Oakes, 2002). As stressed by Leedy and Ormrod (2005), "When a study involves human beings, the general rule of thumb is that the risk involved in participating in a study should not be appreciably greater than the normal risks of day-to-day living." (p.120) Thus, it is the researchers' responsibility to eliminate all risks by conducting research with an ethic of respect towards everyone involved in the research, including participants, sponsors, the educational research community, and themselves (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005; BERA, 2018).

Some of the major concerns regarding ethical issues in conducting the research can be summarised as follows: obtaining informed consent, protecting privacy, guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality. Anyone intending to conduct research involving human participants should bear in mind that these major ethical issues require significant time and energy (Bickman and Rog, 2008). In the following section, I will explain how this research was undertaken in accordance with ethical principles.

To start with informed consent, gaining informed consent from a person who will participate in research is a central tenet of research ethics. This means that potential participants, or legal guardians in the case of children and certain other populations, must be informed about the nature of the research at the start of the study through a consent form, allowing them to decide on their voluntary participation (Leedy and Ormrod, 2015). Researchers must ensure that all potential participants are fully informed through consent forms regarding what is involved in the study, what is being done with data, and their right to withdraw at any time. Also, BERA (2018) has indicated that "What will happen to the information they provide, how that information will be used, and how and to whom it will be reported. They also should be informed about the retention, sharing, and any possible secondary uses of the research data." (p.9) In this regard, it is important to write a simple and friendly consent form in tone to make sure that it is understandable to all potential participants (Bickman and Rog, 2008).

In the case of cross-cultural research like this research, there is a need for ethical consideration of how data originating in another language are produced and interpreted (Liamputtong, 2008). Also, the complexity of negotiating the various ethical differences between cultures is another issue. Thus, conducting cross-cultural research requires intense attention to ethics (Marshall and Batten, 2004). The researcher has spent time in both countries and is aware of cultural differences as a person who was born in Türkiye and came to England to complete his higher education. Thus, the researcher can conduct this cross-cultural research ethically by considering different cultural norms, such as the socio-cultural norms of the languages, the cultural interpretation of the concepts being used, and the norm of the teaching profession in England and Türkiye.

This research was conducted in accordance with the Brunel University Code of Ethics. Thus, to gain approval from the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) to conduct research involving human participants, Brunel University Ethics Online (BREO) applications were completed along with all relevant documents: the gatekeeper invitation letter, participant information sheet, research invitation letter, consent form and, semi-structured interview questions (see 'Appendices 3, 4, 5, and 6'). After receiving ethical approval from BREO, these documents were translated into Turkish by researchers. Next, in accordance with the Türkiye Minister of Education *Research Practice Permission Legislation*, the procedures were followed to gain permission to collect data in Türkiye (MoNE, 2020). However, data collection from Türkiye was not granted, which is unrelated with the quality of study or application. The denial of data collection permission was solely related to the heightened demand for data collection in Turkish schools during the post-COVID era. Thus, it was decided to use existing literature related to classroom teachers' views and practices concerning G&T children in Türkiye to carry out this research and to cease seeking ethical permission to collect primary data from this country.

After that, the participant recruitment process began by contacting the headteachers of state primary schools in England via their publicly available email addresses listed on the school website. This is because, to recruit potential participants, researchers usually need to contact the gatekeeper, who controls access to the potential participants. Gatekeepers might be formally appointed individuals, such as headteachers in schools, or they may be selected from those who unofficially lead a potential participant like a tribal chief in a community (Liamputtong, 2008; Creswell and Creswell, 2017). In this research, contacting the

headteachers was the initial step due to their crucial role in monitoring, supporting, guiding, and advising teachers in their respective areas in England. Thus, the research invitation letter (see 'Appendix 3') and consent form (see 'Appendix 4') were sent to the headteachers of the schools as gatekeepers in this research to inform them about the entire research project and to seek their full collaboration.

After receiving the signed consent from the school headteacher, consent forms were sent to all classroom teachers in this school via email. When a teacher willing to participate in this research was identified and a signed consent form was sent by that person, a semi-structured online interview was conducted. It is worth noting that in all the processes mentioned above, at least seven days were given to potential participants to fully consider the implications of taking part in the study before getting their consent.

Other key issues for the ethical conduct of research are confidentiality and anonymity. As delineated by Coffelt (2017) "Confidentiality refers to separating or modifying any personal, identifying information provided by participants from the data. By contrast, anonymity refers to collecting data without obtaining any personal, identifying information." (p.227) In this context, anonymity is one form of confidentiality that is vital to protecting the privacy of those who voluntarily agree to participate in research. In this research, all potential participants were informed by a consent form about the confidentiality of data and the anonymity of their identities. They were also informed that the meeting would be recorded, and permission for this was obtained through the consent form.

By considering possible difficulties related to conducting face-to-face interviews such as the risk of spreading COVID-19, time, and financial constraints, as well as other logistical considerations, semi-structured online interviews were conducted with participants in England (Deakin, and Wakefield, 2014). Before the semi-structured online interviews, participants were also asked to complete the 'interview orientation feedback sheet' (see 'Appendix 9'). To have more accurate and valid records, all interviews were audio and video recorded by a video conferencing tool committed to the General Data Protection Regulation (2018). To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, signed consent forms were kept apart from other research instruments to prevent any association of names with the data, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. The audio and video recordings were deleted immediately after being transcribed anonymously, with pseudonyms assigned to the participants and schools. (Sarantakos, 2013). Finally, any identifiable content within transcripts were rendered

anonymous. As stressed above, the translation of data from one language to another is an important ethical issue that researchers must consider in cross-cultural research (Liamputtong, 2008). In this research, the researcher translated relevant data from Turkish sources into English. Next, to reduce the risk of translation errors and ensure precise translation of concepts and terms in the analysis of these Turkish sources, assistance from another researcher was sought based on the criteria mentioned in the 'Purposive literature review' section. All anonymised data will be kept strictly confidential for ten years on a secure, password-protected Brunel University of London server from the publication date of this research.

5.4.6 Challenges of data collection in the post-COVID period

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 significantly impacted human existence. In response to the crisis, governments worldwide enacted social contact restrictions in February and March 2020, following the guidance provided by the World Health Organisation. The implementation of these measures had extensive consequences, affecting nearly all sectors, including education (Leal Filho, Wall, Rayman-Bacchus, Mifsud, Pritchard, Lovren, Farinha, Petrovic, and Balogun, 2021). For an extended period, various schools, colleges, and universities around the world were closed as they made the shift from in-person learning to distance learning (Dhawan, 2020). During this adaptation to the new circumstances, increased stress was observed among teachers, students, and parents. Especially as teachers returned to the classroom in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, they faced a significant number of new demands in terms of teaching methods, job responsibilities, and classroom dynamics. These new demands increased teachers' workload even more. Under these circumstances, education ministries around the world encountered significant challenges in collecting data to reflect the consequences of issues related to COVID and the post-COVID period, such as school closures, the transition to distance learning, and the return to schools with new measures (UNESCO, 2020; Pressley, 2021). As a researcher conducting comparative research between two geographically distant countries in the post-COVID era by collecting school-based data, I

encountered several obstacles during the phase of data collection. I occasionally mentioned these challenges while explaining my methodological approach in this chapter. The aim of this section is to describe all the challenges I faced, the solutions I implemented, and their impact on the methodological approach embedded in this research.

One of the initial obstacles encountered after obtaining ethical approval from the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) for the purpose of conducting research involving human participants related to the process of data collection in Türkiye. The issue was that while all the required procedures were diligently followed to obtain permission for data collection in Türkiye in accordance with the Türkiye Minister of Education *Research Practise Permission Legislation*, permission to collect data from Türkiye was ultimately not granted. Importantly, this decision was not due to the quality of this research or the application process. The reason behind this was the high demand for collecting data from schools during the post-COVID period. Given the circumstances, I decided to proceed with my research by collecting primary data from England, as originally planned, while utilising secondary data from Türkiye. This choice was necessitated by the unavailability of permission to collect primary data from Türkiye, primarily due to the heightened demand for data collection in Turkish schools during the post-COVID era.

The second challenge I encountered arose when I attempted to establish contact with the schools I had identified based on my specified criteria to invite them to participate in my research via email in England. To avoid potential issues related to the schools' willingness to participate in this research, I initially selected two schools from each borough. My first attempt involved contacting the schools in all nine originally chosen boroughs. However, due to the demands arising from the post-COVID period, I did not receive any responses from these schools. Consequently, I proceeded to reach out to the additional eight schools I had designated as backups.

After not receiving any responses from the total of seventeen schools I reached out, I decided to pause my efforts to reach out to these schools, intending to try again during a time when they would be less busy. However, my attempt to contact the schools via email during what I considered a more suitable period for communication was once again unsuccessful.

Considering these developments, instead of sending an email, I opted to send personalised physical letters addressed to the headteachers in both the first and second groups I had designated (for more detailed information, revisit the 'Cases selection' section). This alternative approach was chosen in response to the lack of response during my email communication attempts, as I sought to establish a more direct and personalised means of contact with the schools. However, I did not receive any responses from the schools regarding my physical letters, and they did not express interest in participating in my research.

Considering the difficulties I expressed above, I decided to collect data from schools I could access across London, instead of focusing exclusively on schools that I had specifically targeted. Additionally, in conjunction with this change in my research, I also decided to utilise the deprivation data and the number of students eligible for free school meals as an additional criterion when analysing the data collected from schools. This decision aligns with my original plan to examine the relationship among SES levels of schools where they are located, proportion (%) of pupils eligible for free school meals and teachers' expectations from students by incorporating these datasets into my analysis.

Given these developments, I contacted my university's Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Programmes Partnership Office for assistance in recruiting research participants. This office works closely with various schools, educational organisations, and alternative education providers across London boroughs. With the assistance of the Partnership Office, I included a research-related article in the University newsletter and distributed it to hundreds of schools. As a result, I received an email from a single teacher expressing interest in participating in my research. However, due to the teacher's mentioned demanding schedule and substantial workload at the school, we were unable to find a suitable time for the interview, resulting in a cessation of our email communication.

Later, I expanded my investigation by actively involving participants who met the research criteria, including individuals I had a personal connection with or those who were connected to people within my network. By leveraging these personal connections, I continued my efforts to recruit participants for my research (for more detailed information, revisit the 'Approach to sampling in this research' section). In this way, I completed the data collection process by reaching out to my participants.

Taken together, in the post-COVID period, I encountered various challenges related to data collection in both countries included in my research. As I have described in this chapter, I adapted my methodological approach to address these challenges.

Chapter 6: England-presentation of findings

6.1 Introduction

This research presents its findings in two distinct chapters, each dedicated to data collected from two different countries. In this chapter, the focus is on data collected from England through semi-structured interviews. Here, the thematic analysis method is applied to the interviews conducted with the participants involved in the research, which is categorised into three distinct sections.

The analysis in this chapter begins with 'Section 1: Teachers' conceptualisation of the term,' which explores themes that emerged from the interviews, shedding light on how teachers conceptualised the given term. 'Section 2: Teachers' challenges in Gifted Education implementation' addresses the challenges faced by teachers in implementing Gifted education. 'Section 3: Teachers' provision for G&T children' explores themes related to how teachers implemented provisions for G&T children, drawing insights from their experiences and practices as revealed in the interviews. Under these sections, separate analyses are conducted for each case (revisit 'Cases selection' section for a more detailed explanation of how these cases were constructed).

Under each section mentioned above a discussion is included, providing an analysis for each individual case. Next, cross-case analysis will be conducted among these cases to examine similarities and differences. This analysis aims to identify commonalities and distinctions between the cases, thereby enhancing the depth of the research. The first figure below outlines the three main sections with their corresponding themes, as mentioned earlier. The second figure shows the order in which the analysis for each case will be conducted under these headings.

Section 1: Teachers' conceptualisation of the term

- Policy-oriented definition
- Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions
- Calls for more precise terminology
  - Advantages
  - Disadvantages
- Developmental aspect of definition

Section 2: Teachers' challenges in Gifted Education implementation

- Policy-oriented general challenges
  - Undermined support for G&T Children
  - Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education
- Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities
  - Resources
  - Time
  - Parental involvement
  - Teacher education

Section 3: Teachers' provision for G& T children

- Identification
  - School-wide identification
  - Teacher-Specific identification methods
- Student-centred approach to provision
  - Differentiation for all
  - Enrichment
  - Acceleration
  - Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions
  - Peer learning

Figure 3: List of themes

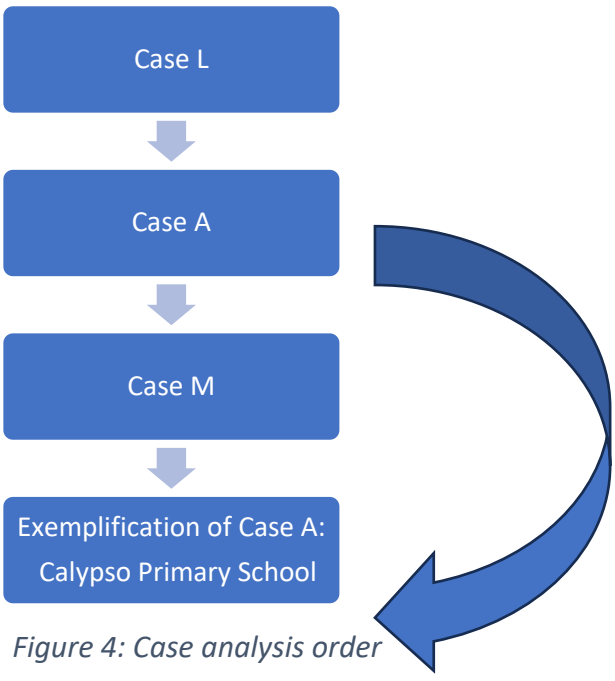


Figure 4: Case analysis order

6.2 Teachers' conceptualisation of the term

6.2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to present findings related to how primary school teachers understand the term 'Giftedness and Talent.' I have chosen to use the term ‘Giftedness and Talent' in this research, as explained in "Chapter 2." However, an overarching objective is to examine the terminologies teachers use and how they conceptualise these terms. To lay the groundwork for the semi-structured interviews, a targeted set of questions, encapsulated in the 'Interview orientation feedback sheet,' was administered (see 'Appendix 9'). Specifically, one of these questions aimed to uncover teachers' preferred terminology for describing children with the ability or potential to develop significantly ahead of their peers in academic or non-academic areas. Guided by the responses gathered from teachers on this form, I tailored the interview questions to align with the terminology preferences expressed by the participants. Consequently, the subsequent interviews were conducted with due consideration to the nuanced language choices of the teachers in articulating their view and understanding of giftedness and talent. The identified themes are as follows:

- Policy-oriented definition
- Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions
- Calls for more precise terminology
    - Advantages
    - Disadvantages
- Developmental aspect of definition

The themes identified from the teachers' responses for each case in this research will be presented separately, emphasising the distinct perspectives gained from each case. The evaluation will be descriptive in nature, based on the theoretical/conceptual evidence available.

In the 'Discussion' section, both the cross-case analysis and findings from all cases will be addressed.

6.2.2. Case L

Policy-oriented definition

In Case Study L, Liam and Luke highlighted the term 'Gifted' to describe this cohort, whereas Lily opted for 'Higher Prior Attaining Children'. Analysis of the definitions used indicates that all participants appeared towards the utilisation of language historically present in policy documents, emphasising 'Gifted,' alongside terminology employed in the National Curriculum Assessment, such as 'Greater Depth' (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft *et al*., 2020; Gov.uk, 2023b). Another point worth noting is that participants were required to explain why they preferred their chosen term by contrasting it with another term. For example, Liam stated that:

> *I would not refer to it as 'more able and talented' because such terminology implies that some individuals possess superior abilities, suggesting that others are less able. I would instead describe them as 'gifted' in my understanding*. (Liam)

Similarly, other participants continued to justify that the terminology they used was preferable to others. Participants' conceptualisations of these terms closely align with their preferences for policy-oriented language, reflecting similar trends observed in other instances. For example, Liam underscored the consistent surpassing of established standards by G&T children.

> *In my definition, gifted children are those who consistently surpass the established standards and curriculum expectations by a significant margin*. (Liam)

Lily echoed similar sentiments, emphasising consistent achievement beyond age expectations, stating,

> *I would say that these individuals are children who consistently achieve and attain significantly higher levels than what is expected for their age*. (Lily)

In contrast, Luke provided a perspective that extends beyond academic achievement, focusing on problem-solving, comprehension skills, and self-regulation. He stated:

> *Gifted children describe students who have better problem-solving skills or comprehension skills compared to their peers. I would say it also means that they can easily understand complex topics or regulate themselves better*. (Luke)

Reviewing Luke's definition, it could be suggested that Luke emphasised the requisite skills for academic achievement. Like the other two participants, his definition focuses solely on academic aspects without considering non-academic areas. The investigation of Case L has shown that none of the participants focused on non-academic areas in their definition. This investigation further revealed a preference for terminology aligned with past and current policy documents, emphasising terms like 'Gifted' and 'Higher Prior Attaining Children.'

Another notable observation is that despite Ofsted giving special emphasis to this cohort in the inspection report of these schools using the term 'Most Able' and Lily's school (Littlewood Primary School) has a specific section in its Inclusion Policy for 'more able' children, none of the teachers in this case used these terms. This observation could suggest a discrepancy between policy documents and teacher preferences, indicating that teachers prioritise their own terminology over dominant policy imperatives. This analysis highlights the complex relationship between and the perspectives of teachers. While policies may dictate certain terms and approaches, teachers may prioritise concerns that differ from these policies, reflecting the diversity of perspectives within the educational system (Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2015).

Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions

Examining the participants' perspectives on 'giftedness and talent' reveals a prominent trend: a pervasive association of these concepts with academic aptitude and surpassing conventional educational benchmarks. However, as our discussions progressed under various headings, such

as 'early signs of being gifted and talented' the definitions provided by Luke, Lily, and Liam expanded to encompass both cognitive and affective characteristics of these individuals.

Liam's perspective underscores this complexity as he stated:

> *Gifted individuals not only meet but far surpass academic standards, often to a significant extent.* (Liam)

He further elaborated on the cognitive aspects, noting characteristics such as:

> *Mature ways of thinking, abstract thinking, and the ability to understand others' perspectives*. (Liam)

This suggests that 'giftedness and talent' encompass a broad spectrum of abilities that transcend traditional academic metrics. Luke contributed to this discussion by highlighting the autonomy and self-reliance commonly observed among gifted and talented children. He said:

> *Gifted students often exhibit certain traits. They tend to be more self-reliant when it comes to learning, self-assessment, and organising their own learning They may require less external support compared to their peers*. (Luke)

This emphasises that giftedness involves not only excelling academically but also the capacity to self-direct and manage one's learning effectively, aligns with research findings on the social and emotional characteristics of gifted and talented children (Subotnik *et al*., 2011). Additionally, Lily brought attention to the importance of non-academic attributes among G&T children:

> *Common characteristics often include confidence in their thinking skills, creativity, strong problem-solving abilities, and a degree of resilience.* (Lily)

This broadens the understanding of 'giftedness and talent' to encompass not just cognitive abilities but also personal qualities crucial for success in various domains of life.

While there may be differing opinions among participants, commonalities emerge, as mentioned by Lily:

> *Not every individual possesses all traits associated with giftedness and talen*t. (Lily)

This underscores the notion that the abilities and qualities defining G&T children are unique to children. Furthermore, both Liam and Lily acknowledged the potential challenges faced by

G&T children, highlighting specific characteristics associated with giftedness and talent. Liam stated:

> *The need for socialisation is crucial for gifted students. While they may excel academically, they often face challenges in social interactions. Their peers may not share the same level of maturity, which can lead to feelings of isolation or being out of sync with their classmates*. (Liam)

This underscores the affective characteristic of 'giftedness and talent ', particularly in relation to emotional well-being and social integration. Conversely, Lily pointed out:

> *Gifted individuals may struggle with boredom or a strong desire for precision, impacting their educational experience and behaviour*. (Lily)

This draws attention to cognitive characteristics, such as a heightened need for intellectual stimulation and attention to detail, while also underlining potential negative aspects of giftedness and talent. Therefore, both Liam and Lily contribute to the broader understanding of 'giftedness and talent' by addressing both the positive and challenging dimensions of this complex phenomenon.

In conclusion, the insights provided by Liam, Luke, and Lily, offer a comprehensive understanding of 'giftedness and talent' that extends beyond academic achievement. Their discussions encompass a wide range of cognitive and affective characteristics, emphasising both the positive attributes and potential challenges associated with giftedness and talent. This nuanced perspective highlights the diverse nature of G&T children and underscores the importance of considering their strengths and needs in educational settings.

Calls for more precise terms

Participants in discussions about terminology in education, such as 'high achiever' or 'gifted and talented,' present varied viewpoints, highlighting the need for more precise language to describe students' abilities. Liam said:

> *The term 'gifted' is sufficient; no additional term is necessary*. (Liam)

However, Lily advocated for a more nuanced approach:

> *I believe that within education, we need to find effective ways to refer to students' abilities. It is crucial that everyone has equal access to opportunities. While using definitions and specific terms to describe different groups of children can be helpful, I have concerns about making blanket decisions based on labels like 'really able' or 'not able.' Education is not that straightforward*. (Lily)

Similarly, Luke criticised current terms like 'talented' and 'high performing,' arguing that they oversimplify students' abilities. He contended:

> *These terms fail to capture the complexity of achievement, which involves a combination of factors like hard work, practice, and innate talent. We need new terminology that recognises the diverse range of talents and abilities students possess, moving beyond simplistic labels. This would enable educators to better understand and support students across a wider spectrum of abilities.* (Luke)

The findings of this analysis indicate that teachers suggested the current terminology used to refer G&T children is both complex and inadequate.

Advantages

The advantages of employing definitions in education, as highlighted by Liam, Lily, and Luke, underscored the positive impact of clear language on various aspects of teaching and learning. For instance, Lily pointed out:

> *We avoid labelling children as 'gifted and talented' because it often applies to only one area. Instead, we use the term 'higher prior attaining' to describe children who have previously achieved at a high level.* (Lily)

She mentioned that this allows educators to focus on students' previous achievements without letting it affect their judgement of future potential. Similarly, Luke suggested:

> *I believe that the usage of these terms can be beneficial when used thoughtfully and in the right context. They can help educators better understand and cater to their students' needs*. (Luke)

Likewise, it has been emphasised that the use of these terms, from lesson planning to implementation, serves as an indicator to provide educators with information about students' levels. Therefore, the advantage of using these terms lies in enabling educators to plan lessons and provide support tailored to students' levels.

Disadvantages

Examining the use of terms like 'gifted and talented,' uncovering concerns raised by Liam, Lily, and Luke. Their perspectives reveal potential pitfalls, from reinforcing hierarchies to fostering competition and self-doubt. Liam emphasised the limitations of such terms:

> *Everyone possesses skills and talents they excel in. However, when you label only a specific group as 'gifted individuals,' you risk overlooking the unique abilities and talents that others have*. (Liam)

Along the same lines, Lily expressed apprehensions about the implications of labelling students:

> *While using definitions and specific terms to describe different groups of children can be helpful, I have concerns about making blanket decisions based on labels like 'really able' or 'not able.'* (Lily)

This concern aligns with research findings that suggest a broad definition of 'giftedness and talent' that includes various domains of talent and abilities (Renzulli, 1986).

As for Luke, He underscored the importance of sensitivity in using this term:

> *It is crucial to be mindful of the potential negative impact of labelling students and to use these terms with sensitivity to avoid unintentionally causing harm or creating a sense of competition among students*. (Luke)

He warns against openly labelling students as 'talented' in front of their peers, as it may lead to feelings of inadequacy in those not similarly recognised (Gates, 2010).

Together, these perspectives highlight the complexities and potential consequences of employing terms like 'gifted and talented' in educational settings. They emphasised the need for a thoughtful and inclusive approach that recognises and values the diverse abilities of all students, while avoiding the reinforcement of hierarchies or competition.

Developmental aspect of definition

During discussions concerning conceptualisation of term 'gifted and talented', the initial definitions primarily focused on surpassing academic benchmarks. However, as the dialogue unfolded with Liam, Lily, and Luke, it became evident that this initial narrow perspective broadened to include a more comprehensive range of considerations. Viewed as a developmental process, Lily and Luke's perspectives offer different insights into the factors influencing the development of G&T children:

> *While genetics may contribute, environmental factors and appropriate guidance are equally crucial in developing a child's talents and skills*. (Luke)

> *I believe that the social environment plays a significant role in influencing the development of more able and/or talented children. Encouraging open thought processes without limitations is essential for their development*. (Lily)

They highlighted the importance of both genetic and environmental factors in fostering a child's talents and skills, with Luke emphasising the role of guidance alongside genetics, while Lily underscored the influential role of the social environment, advocating for an environment that encourages open thought processes without limitations as essential for the development of G&T children. In contrast, Luke provided a broader perspective, acknowledging multiple factors at play. He stated:

> *There are several factors that influence the development of gifted children, including genetics, socio-economic background, effective parenting, and quality teaching*. (Luke)

Luke emphasised the interplay of these factors in determining a child's talent and ability. He further asserted:

> *Without proper recognition and guidance, a child's talents can go to waste*. (Luke)

In summary, while both Lily and Luke recognised the multifaceted nature of talent development, Lily focuses more on the social and psychological aspects, highlighting the importance of the social environment. On the other hand, Luke offers a more comprehensive view that encompasses various environmental and educational factors alongside genetics, emphasising their combined influence on talent development.

Furthermore, it is worth considering that these perspectives predominantly emerge from schools located in some of the least deprived London boroughs. This context suggests a leaning towards prioritising social and environmental factors over genetics, likely due to the considerable parental engagement highlighted in Ofsted reports for these schools and its observed positive impact on children's achievement.

6.2.3 Case A

Policy-oriented definition

In this case, three teachers, Aspal, Ava, and Adam, each described the group under research using different terminology: Aspal referred to them as 'Gifted, ' Ava as 'Gifted and Talented,' and Adam as 'Gifted' and 'Academically Advanced.' The teachers' use of 'Gifted and Talented' suggests alignment with policy terminology from the White Paper Schools: *Achieving Success* (DfES, 2001).

When it comes to these teachers' understanding of the term, Adam stands out as the only one employing two distinct terms for this group. In exploring the potential differences in meaning between the terms he uses, Adam elucidated:

> *I typically use academically advanced for children who excel in subjects like math and English, while 'gifted' is more commonly used in non-academic areas like music.* (Adam)

Adam's approach to using two different terms to express excellence in both academic and non-academic domains is noteworthy. While he reserved 'Academically Advanced' for emphasising exceeding standards specifically in subjects like math and English, he employed 'Gifted' to denote excellence in non-academic areas such as music.

Unlike Adam's distinct delineation between 'Academically Advanced' and 'Gifted' for different domains, Aspal's use of a single term encompassed both academic and non-academic facets:

> *My understanding of gifted children is that they are students who are able to progress ahead of their peers in the classroom and learn things quickly. These students are naturally more intelligent than others, not only in academic areas but also in non-academic domains.* (Aspal)

A noteworthy observation in Aspal's definition is the use of the term 'intelligent'. However, it does not appear to be in the context of an IQ-based cognitive approach to giftedness and talent, as Aspal's definition aligns more with a multidimensional understanding of the concept, encompassing various domains of ability. The historical association of 'intelligence' with giftedness and talent, dating back to early studies utilising IQ tests, may explain this divergence: despite the shift from an IQ-based approach to a multidimensional understanding of giftedness and talent, the term 'intelligence' may remain ingrained in some circles. Aspal's attempt to define the term 'gifted and talented' using another term could be seen as an example of vagueness in its usage (Binet and Simon,1905; Smedsrud, 2020).

Ava like Aspal and Adam, conceptualised the term 'Gifted and Talented' to encompass both non-academic and academic domains:

> *My understanding of gifted and talented is that it refers to individuals who exhibit exceptional skills or abilities in various areas. This can encompass a wide range of talents and capabilities, both in academic and non-academic domains.* (Ava)

Considering the terms teachers preferred to use when referring to G&T children and their conceptualisation, it could be argued that they reflect characteristics like those observed during the period before the decentralisation of services for G&T children in England (Eyre, 2009).

Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions

In this case, unlike others, teachers collectively integrated both academic and non-academic domains into their conceptualisation of giftedness and talent. Consequently, while acknowledging traits like quick learning, creativity, perfectionism, receptiveness to lessons, and self-directed learning, which are commonly emphasised in other cases, they also linked further qualities to the concept of being gifted and talented. For instance, Aspal stated that:

> *Having a good sense of humour is another characteristic associated with gifted children. A sense of humour often comes hand in hand with a broad knowledge base, enabling students to make jokes and references that demonstrate their understanding of complex concepts.* (Aspal)

Aspal's observation sheds light on the multidimensional nature of giftedness and talent, suggesting that traits like a good sense of humour can also be indicative. Ava's remarks further underscored the diversity within the gifted and talented population:

> *I think there are common characteristics among gifted and talented students, but they can be divided into two main groups. Some of them tend to be introverted and deeply engrossed in their thoughts, not as socially outgoing. Others, on the contrary, can be quite extroverted, talkative, and inquisitive. (Ava)*

Ava's insights highlighted the diversity of the G&T children, emphasising students' various social behaviours. Adam's addition broadens our understanding by emphasising affective characteristics like moral sensitivity and abstract contemplation:

> *Gifted children typically exhibit moral sensitivity, caring about others, and demonstrating an advanced capacity to contemplate abstract concepts such as justice and fairness.* (Adam)

This case study transcends a narrow definition of giftedness and talent, instead embracing a holistic view that integrates both academic and non-academic domains. Collectively, these diverse perspectives emphasise the broad range of characteristics associated with 'giftedness and talent' and present vibrant portrait of its complexity.

Calls for more precise terms

In this case, teachers used terms such as 'Gifted,' 'Gifted and Talented,' and 'Gifted' and 'Academically Advanced' to refer to this cohort, and their definitions encompass both academic and non-academic areas. Adam highlighted the inadequacy of terms in reflecting the diverse abilities of students, stating:

> *Children exhibit diverse strengths, with some demonstrating exceptional abilities in specific areas. It is intriguing why the term 'gifted' is often applied more frequently in discussions related to music and art compared to other subjects. This terminology can be adaptable and open to modification to better reflect the varied talents and aptitudes of individuals.* (Adam)

Correspondingly, Ava also articulated the necessity of finding alternative terms to replace the ones used to describe this group.

> *Labels like 'gifted and talented' may inadvertently reinforce notions of intellectual elitism or perpetuate stereotypes about achievement. Hence, there is a need for more accurate and fair language that promotes a culture of valuing diverse talents and strengths in all individuals*. (Ava)

The common point emphasised by both Adam and Ava is the inadequacy of the terms in accurately capturing the diverse abilities of students. They both advocate for the need to find alternative terms to describe this cohort, which better reflect the varied talents and aptitudes of children. Aspal's focus on selecting language with care aligns with Adam and Ava's calls for more accurate and inclusive terminology:

> *By conscientiously selecting our language and considering its wider societal implications, we can advocate for the implementation of more precise terms within the education context. This, in turn, fosters the development of equitable and inclusive*

> *educational systems that cater to the needs of gifted students as well as all learners.* (Aspal)

Together, their insights highlight the importance of language in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards education, ultimately contributing to a more supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

Advantages

While concerns remain about the potential negative effects of directly labelling children with terms like 'gifted' or 'academically advanced,' participants like Aspal and Ava highlighted crucial advantages of using terminology within the educational setting.

Aspal emphasised the significance of these terms in identifying students with exceptional abilities:

> *These terms help identify students with exceptional abilities, allowing for tailored education. This goes beyond labels; it empowers educators to move away from a one-size-fits-all approach and design learning experiences that cultivate each student's unique potential.* (Aspal)

Ava focused on how using these terms facilitates exchanging information about children's abilities and levels among other educators, and enables differentiation in teaching:

> *Terminology ensures clarity, helping educators accurately identify students' levels and tailor education plans accordingly. Precise terminology allows for targeted interventions and ensures every student receives the support they need to thrive. (Ava)*

Adam, however, presents a more balanced view. He acknowledged the potential harm of directly labelling students as 'gifted', but recognises the need for differentiation. He regarded terminology as a tool to understand the complexities of student needs and tailor approaches effectively:

> *I would not necessarily call them gifted to their faces… but there has to be some kind of terminology to differentiate the various levels and strengths of the children you work with.* (Adam)

Overall, although the importance of responsibly using terminology to mitigate potential negative effects was repeatedly emphasised by the teachers in this case, they also acknowledged its undeniable benefits within education.

Disadvantages

In discussing the need for alternative terms to describe the cohort, Ava, Adam, and Aspal highlighted the potential negative effects associated with the current terminology. These include the reinforcement of elitism, the inadequate representation of diverse abilities, and the exclusion of unidentified students. In addition to the points raised, Ava, and Adam further elaborated on the potential negative effects of using terms:

> *When speaking with friends or colleagues, I opt for simpler terms like to ensure a more accessible and easily understood conversation. On the negative side, it can lead to confusion, misinterpretation, or unintended biases if not used carefully. So, the choice of terminology should consider the audience and its potential impact.* (Ava)

Adam drew attention to the potential psychological effects on individual students when directly labelled as 'gifted' or 'academically advanced.' He said:

> *Directly referring to a child as gifted or academically advanced to their face can lead to certain effects. It might create expectations, self-imposed pressure, or the feeling of needing to outperform others. These effects can be long-lasting, so we must exercise caution when addressing these children.* (Adam)

On the other hand, Aspal discussed the potential impact of using terms on the unidentified group and classroom cohesion:

> *Some people may argue that the negative aspect of using these terms is that it can potentially create a sense of inferiority among other students. It may lead to a division or separation among students.* (Aspal)

Ava, Adam, and Aspal compellingly argued for alternative terms to describe gifted students. They raise concerns that the current terminology reinforces elitism, overlooks diverse abilities, excludes unidentified students, and potentially harms G&T children through pressure and expectation.

Developmental aspect of definition

In this case, the three teachers collectively approached the concept of 'Gifted and Talented,' considering it within the framework of abilities encompassing both academic and non-academic domains. Similarly, when examining their views on the nature vs nurture issue concerning giftedness and talent, they all regarded it as a developmental process influenced by an interplay of various factors. For example, Aspal emphasised the significance of both parenting and genetics:

> *I think genetic, socio-economic level, effective parenting come into play at one point for gifted children. However, if you are talking about primary school students, a lot of it could be genetic and parenting. This is because they do not have a big social life or much influence from peers since most of their time is spent going to school and going back home. So, genetics and how they spend their time outside of school … contribute to their development.* (Aspal)

In contrast, Adam and Ava prioritised environmental factors over genetics.

> *While there may be some genetic influence, I believe that environmental factors play a more significant role, especially during the formative years before primary school.* (Ava)

> *The combination of the environment and perhaps something that we have inherited, something innate within each individual, plays a role. It is a combination of the two. When it comes to innate factors, there's not much to say, as they are inherent. However, the environment is crucial in nurturing and developing what might be innate.* (Adam)

This case illuminates the intricate tapestry encompassed by the terms of 'giftedness and talent'. While genetics and innate abilities are recognised as contributing factors, the collective perspectives of the teachers underscore the pivotal influence of environmental dynamics, especially during the crucial formative years.

6.2.4 Case M

Policy-oriented definition

In this case, the four teachers, namely Mary, Michelle, Megan, and Melissa, indicated that they use the following terms to describe these group: Mary as 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted,' Michelle as 'Academically More Able' or 'More Able,' Megan as 'Gifted and Talented,' and similarly, Melissa as 'Gifted and Talented.' Participants predominantly use the terms 'gifted' and 'gifted and talented,' despite their absence in current policy documents (DfES, 2001). They also refer to Ofsted-endorsed terms like 'High Achiever,' 'Academically More Able,' or 'More Able' (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft *et al*., 2020). This suggests participants employ terminology widely used in both past and present education policies.

As previously mentioned, Mary and Michelle referred to this group using two different terms. Mary used the terms 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted,' while Michelle preferred 'Academically More Able' or 'More Able.'

> *When it comes to categorising students, we employ various terms such as 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted.'* (Mary)

> *We use the terms 'Academically More Able' and 'More Able' interchangeably without any distinction between their definitions.* (Michelle)

These statements indicate that the participants in this case use the terms interchangeably when describing the group.

When analysing the ways in which educators define these concepts, two distinct patterns come to light. In the initial trend, Mary and Michelle place significant emphasis on academic excellence, as evidenced by the alignment of their definitions with the prioritisation of national curriculum standards.

> *'High achiever' or 'Gifted' are those consistently surpassing age-related expectations in one or more subjects. Our definition centres on sustained academic excellence, typically observed over a year or more.* (Mary)

> *'More able' students are those consistently surpassing age-related expectations in one or more subjects. Our definition centres on sustained academic excellence, typically observed over a year or more.* (Michelle)

On the other hand, the definitions provided by Megan and Melissa differ from the above in how they interpreted the terms, as they encompassed various talent domains and not solely focus on academic achievement:

> *I understand 'gifted and talented' individuals as those who possess exceptional abilities or talents in various areas. These abilities can manifest in diverse forms, and as a teacher, I frequently encounter a wide range of cognitive talents. These talents can be seen in different domains, both physical and cognitive.* (Megan)

> *I believe that the terms 'gifted' and 'talented' carry different meanings. For me, gifted learners are those who excel academically, demonstrating extraordinary abilities in subjects like mathematics, language arts, English, or the sciences. These students exhibit high performance or potential in academic areas. On the other hand, talented learners are more associated with creative fields such as music, art, drama, dance, and physical education.* (Melissa)

Another noteworthy point is that while Melissa makes a distinction between 'Gifted' and 'Talented' children, Megan does not differentiate between the two. This discrepancy serves as an example of the variations seen in the literature, even when using the single term 'Gifted and Talented' (Gagné, 2005).

The analysis of Mary, Michelle, Megan, and Melissa's viewpoints demonstrates the complexities of defining students in gifted education. While some prioritise academic excellence, others consider a broader range of skills in addition to academic excellence. In

addition, Melissa and Megan's opposing viewpoints on the distinction between 'gifted' and 'talented' further emphasise the mentioned definitional ambiguity.

Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions

While the participants' understanding of terms is primarily focused on exceeding academic standards, Melissa and Megan's definitions include cognitive and other talent domains. Following my conversations with these participants, the discussion expanded to include cognitive and affective characteristics. This expansion broadens the discussion by considering new aspects of how people understand the concepts.

One prominent cognitive characteristic highlighted by the participants is the ability to quickly grasp concepts, as exemplified by Mary's and Michelle's statement:

> *High achiever children quickly achieve set targets. Whether it is in the form of academic goals or other learning milestones, high achievers tend to reach and surpass these objectives promptly, sometimes within just a few lessons.* (Mary)

> *Children may demonstrate a quicker grasp of concepts and start forming connections between different ideas within subjects*. (Michelle)

Melissa's observation provides additional insight into the cognitive aspect of giftedness and talent, as she stated:

> *They read very quickly. When talking about the primary level, they usually read more than other children and read faster. They finish given tasks, for example, a 10-minute assignment, in 7 or 5 minutes compared to others.* (Melissa)

This observation adds another layer to the understanding of giftedness and talent, emphasising the close link between cognitive abilities and academic performance. Megan similarly emphasised the ability to quickly grasp concepts, also bringing attention to various cognitive and affective characteristics associated with giftedness and talent.

> *Common characteristics of gifted and talented children include fast learning, quick critical and cognitive thinking, proficiency in various skills, intense focus on specific interests, a strong sense of curiosity, leadership qualities, and empathy and the ability to understand and share others' emotions.* (Megan)

Participants may regard these characteristics as essential skills for academic success in gifted and talented children. However, it is important to note that the participants did not only discuss positive traits associated with G&T children but also mentioned both cognitive and affective negative traits.

> *I believe they struggle more with concentration; they have difficulty gathering their thoughts. Even though their ideas are excellent, I find them a bit scattered. This is related to concentration. In my opinion, their attention span is lower than average.* (Melissa)

> *High achievers often need to receive acknowledgment, which can have both positive and negative effects. Excessive praise may lead to complacency and an inflated sense of self.* (Mary)

The participants' discussions highlight the multifaceted nature of cognitive and affective characteristics among gifted and talented children. While certain traits may contribute positively to academic achievement and success in various fields, others, such as difficulties with concentration and the potential negative effects of excessive praise, underscore the challenges and complexities involved in supporting these individuals.

Calls for more precise terminology

The examination of how the four teachers in this case refer to the specific group and conceptualise the associated terms has been previously discussed. While Mary and Megan acknowledged both the positive and negative aspects of the terms they chose to use, the other two participants primarily focused on the negative side. In examining the perspectives of the four teachers regarding the terminology used to refer to G&T children, it becomes evident that while they acknowledged both the positive and negative aspects of such terms, there is a shared concern for the need to find alternative terms to describe these students more accurately.

It seems crucial for us to identify a term that precisely encompasses the various aspects of this group without creating a hierarchy or excluding other students. (Mary)

We may indeed use alternative terms to describe individuals with exceptional abilities. For instance, we might refer to someone as having a 'natural talent' if they excel in something without prior training or experience. (Megan)

The terminology we use has a direct impact on students' self-perception and our approach to education, so it is crucial that we re-evaluate it. (Melissa)

I believe there is a need for consideration of alternative terms to ensure inclusivity and accuracy in describing the diverse abilities within the student population. (Michelle)

The collaborative insights of Mary, Megan, Melissa, and Michelle shed light on the intricate deliberations regarding the terminology employed for this cohort. Their collective acknowledgment of both the positive and negative aspects of existing terms emphasise a shared recognition of the need for more precise and inclusive language. This unified plea for alternative terminology resonates with the broader aim of fostering an educational environment that embraces diversity and equality.

Advantages

As previously stated, Megan and Michelle only highlighted the positive aspects of using these terms, whereas all other participants in this case study focused on the negative aspects.

These terms can help to identify and support students with exceptional abilities. (Megan)

On the positive side, within the school, we internally identify these students. This enables every teacher to actively engage in stretching and challenging these children to ensure their continuous growth. (Michelle)

Megan and Michelle both highlighted the benefits of using specific terms to identify and support this cohort. They emphasised how such identification within the school community enables targeted engagement and efforts to support these students' ongoing development. Another distinguishing feature of this case is the participants' overall emphasis on the negative

aspects. Given that terms like 'Gifted and Talented', 'More Able', or 'High Achiever' are not explicitly addressed in the school policies, and there is no indication of a positive or negative evaluation of this group in recent Ofsted reports, it could be suggested that this lack of emphasis on this cohort within official documentation likely influenced the participants' tendency to lean towards the negative side when discussing terminology and its implications.

Disadvantages

In this case, all participants expressed various negative aspects of using specific terms to categorise students. it is noteworthy that all participants in this case have highlighted different negative aspects associated with using specific terms to classify students. Mary, for instance, highlights the potential negative impacts of labelling a child as 'Most Able' or 'Gifted', suggesting that such classification might restrict the development of their unidentified diverse abilities, limit their potential, and predetermine their future achievements. She also stresses that this could lead to a lack of effort in fostering their overall growth, both from the individuals themselves and from educators.

> *One of the negatives is that labelling a child as 'most able' or 'gifted' may limit their potential by predetermining their future achievements. In my opinion, classifying children in such a manner might hinder their growth into different abilities as they mature. However, when children are labelled in this way, there tends to be a lack of effort in fostering their development.* (Mary)

Michelle, similar to Mary, underscores the potential adverse effects of such labelling on the development of identified children. However, she specifically emphasises the pressure that may be felt by these children and their families as a result of such categorisation:

> *The downside of using such terms lies in the potential expectations and pressures that may accompany them. There is a risk of instigating undue stress both from parents and the students themselves, as there might be a perceived need to consistently perform at an 'A' level as a more able child.* (Michelle)

While Mary and Michelle discuss the potential negative impact of labelling on the identified student, Megan addressed how labelling could affect the other non-identified students:

> *The usage of the terms 'gifted and talented' can have both positive and negative aspects. These terms are commonly associated with a small group of students, which can make others feel excluded. For example, when only 5 out of 20 students are labelled as 'gifted,' it may lead to feelings of disadvantage among the rest.* (Megan)

What emerges from the findings of this case is that participants shed light on different negative aspects associated with using specific terms to classify students. They pointed out how such labelling can limit potential, induce undue pressure, and foster feelings of exclusion among students.

Developmental aspect of definition

All teachers in this case, akin to other cases, acknowledged the nature vs nurture debate, highlighting the impact of factors such as genetics, socio-economic status, and effective parenting on the G&T children. When discussing how the teachers in this case conceptualised the terms, it was stressed that Mary and Michelle exclusively framed the term within an academic context, whereas the other two teachers offered definition by incorporating additional talent domains alongside academic excellence. By considering the differences in how teachers conceptualised the term, it was observed that there is a correlation between how these terms are conceptualised and how the developmental process of being gifted and talented is interpreted in terms of the extent to which factors impact it. Specifically, those who consider academic domains tend to suggest that genetic factors have less influence:

> *When considering the factors that contribute to the development of high-achieving children, it is crucial to emphasise that genetics plays a relatively minor role compared to socio-economic background.* (Mary)

> *As for the genetic aspect, there are instances where we notice a correlation. For example, a child may have a parent who is a scientist, and they exhibit exceptional skills in maths and science. However, I believe that the family background and experiences*

> *significantly contribute to a child's development. It is the combination of a supportive family environment, cultural capital, and personal experiences that often shape a child's abilities and talents.* (Michelle)

On the other hand, Megan and Melissa had different opinions. Megan noted that gifted and talented children's development is complicated, making it difficult to attribute their success to a single factor. However, Melissa emphasised genetics as the most important factor, while acknowledging the role of education and family in shaping a child's abilities and talents:

> *When considering the factors that influence the development of G&T children, it is a complex interplay of various elements. These factors may include genetics, socio-economic status, and effective parenting. However, it is challenging to pinpoint a single decisive factor, as many variables come into play.* (Megan)

> *I believe genetics is the primary factor. If you ask me to quantify it, I would say the majority, around a large percentage, is influenced by genetics. However, if you nurture it with the right education, it can increase. Education is, of course, crucial. The family's approach and the activities and opportunities provided at home contribute to these differences.* (Melissa)

The varying perspectives among teachers in this case underscores the complexity of the nature versus nurture debate in the development of gifted and talented children. The correlation observed between teachers' conceptualisations of 'giftedness and talent' and their interpretation of this debate highlights the interconnectedness of these concepts.

6.2.5. Calypso Primary School

Policy-oriented definition

Within the 'Policy-oriented definition' theme, the preferences of five participants regarding the terminology used to describe G&T children and their conceptualisation of the term are discussed. Alex opted for the term 'High Achiever,' while Emily favoured 'High Able' or 'Greater depth children.' David used the term 'More Able,' Sarah selected 'High Achiever,' and

John alternated between 'Gifted and Talented' or 'More Able.' Furthermore, when participants described this group using two different terms, they emphasised that they were used interchangeably, implying that there was no significant difference in meaning between the terms.

Following an examination of the terms that the participants favoured, it is apparent that all individuals in this case gravitate towards using terminology historically found in policy documents, particularly 'Gifted and Talented,' and presently or previously endorsed by Ofsted, such as 'More Able,' 'High Achiever,' and 'High Able,' along with those employed in the National Curriculum Assessment, including 'Greater Depth' (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Ofsted, 2013; Loft *et al.*, 2020; Gov.uk, 2023b).

The policy-oriented terminology preferences of participants in this case are reflected in how they conceptualise these terms. Despite the absence of an official terminological reference for this group, a significant number of participants emphasise academic excellence, aligning their definition with the emphasis on national curriculum standards (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft *et al*., 2020). Alex said:

> *In my interpretation, high achievers are children who demonstrate a high level of success in the classroom, typically ranking within the top 20% in terms of their knowledge and performance*. (Alex)

Emily provided another perspective:

> *High-ability or greater depth children are those who exhibit a rapid understanding of learning objectives, often necessitating additional challenges in the classroom.* (Emily)

John contributes to the discussion, sharing:

> *It is my understanding that these are children who are working above the age-related expectations for each of the year groups they are in*. (John)

Notably, the participants' reflections predominantly focus on academic achievements, with no explicit consideration of non-academic areas. These individual interpretations collectively underscore a shared emphasis on academic achievement and reveal a nuanced understanding of the described student population within the context of national curriculum standards (Gov.uk, 2023b). Examination of David and Sarah's conceptualisations introduces a nuanced perspective, as distinct from those mentioned:

> *More able students are those who display strong fluency in their skills, demonstrating a solid understanding of reasoning questions. They exhibit the ability to employ various methods to arrive at the correct answer, showcasing proficiency in navigating different situations effectively* (David).

> *A high achiever, in my understanding, refers to a student who demonstrates exceptional proficiency in utilising their innate numerical intuition to solve problems, often employing mental calculations* (Sarah).

In examining the conceptualisations provided by David and Sarah, it is notable that neither participant explicitly emphasises non-academic areas in their definitions. David, in addressing 'More Able,' focuses on fluency, understanding of reasoning questions, and proficiency in problem-solving, implying a holistic view of cognitive abilities within an academic context. Similarly, Sarah, in defining a 'High Achiever,' concentrates on exceptional proficiency in numerical intuition and mental calculations, providing a specific and quantitative perspective on academic success. While both participants contribute valuable insights into specific criteria for academic achievement, neither explicitly includes non-academic domains in their considerations. Instead, they further underscored the importance of cognitive abilities and problem-solving skills as integral components of academic success. This observation suggests that, within the context of this discussion, the participants maintain a predominant emphasis on academic achievements, framing the discussion around mastery of subject-specific concepts and quantitative indicators of success.

In conclusion, participants emphasised preferred terminology aligned with high academic standards or the requisite skills they deemed necessary for achievement. Nevertheless, the prevailing theme centred on academic success, with a conspicuous absence of explicit consideration for non-academic dimensions.

Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions

In examining participants' definitions of giftedness and talent, it becomes evident that the primary focus, as previously noted, centres on academic achievement and surpassing

established academic standards. Notably, David and Sarah enriched the dialogue by exploring specific cognitive characteristics that, upon closer examination, reveal themselves as a requisite skill for academic success.

Unlike David and Sarah, the definitions provided by other participants do not explicitly include the characteristics of this cohort. However, these common traits were later expounded upon under various question headings such as 'early signs of being gifted and talented,' 'most recognised needs of this group, ' and 'common characteristics associated with G&T children.' This evolution indicates an enrichment of their initial definitions, now with a more focused emphasis on both cognitive and affective characteristics of these children.

In examining the perspectives shared by participants on the characteristics, early signs of being gifted and talented and the most recognised needs of this group several commonalities and divergent points emerge. Across participants, a recurrent focus is the emphasis on autonomy and independence among G&T children. Alex underscored this by stating:

> *Common characteristics of high achievers often include a preference for independent work. These students tend to engage in a lot of individual work, allowing their own thought processes to guide them*. (Alex)

Emily echoed this sentiment:

> *They do not need as much scaffolding as their peers, picking up ideas and concepts at a faster pace*. (Emily)

The shared perspectives highlight the recurring emphasis on self-discipline as a characteristic of gifted and talented children. It could be suggested that this trait was considered a contributing factor to academic achievement.

Furthermore, Emily's earlier statement highlighting the speed at which high-ability children grasp concepts enriches Alex's. He highlighted:

> *Early signs of being a high achiever in primary school may include someone who, while not necessarily very confident, demonstrates an early understanding of the fundamental aspects of the subject matter*. (Alex)

David added depth to this by emphasising:

> *A child may exhibit these qualities by being a high achiever and demonstrating a keen understanding of the material being taught. The speed at which they grasp concepts and their ability to produce work based on that understanding are crucial factors*. (David)

Considering that most participants conceptualise the term 'giftedness and talent ' as exceeding academic standards, the capacity to quickly grasp concepts could be viewed as a necessary cognitive skill for academic achievement and directly, for being identified as gifted and talented.

However, it is crucial to note that while most participants primarily emphasise positive characteristics, such as independent learning, having confidence, and rapid learning, Alex and John acknowledged the potential sensitivity of G&T children, providing a more nuanced perspective on their social and emotional aspects:

> *The most recognised need of high-achiever students in my classroom is a strong desire for praise and recognition*. (Alex)

In parallel, John introduced a nuanced dimension, noting that:

> *G&T children can be sensitive to failure due to their reputation for academic excellence*. (John)

On the other hand, John introduced a classification within the G&T spectrum, stating that these children can be categorised into those who follow prescribed methods and those who intuitively grasp solutions. John notes:

> *There are two broad categories: those who have been explicitly taught and follow a prescribed method, and those who are naturally gifted and can intuitively see the solution to a problem*. (John)

This classification not only recognises the diverse learning approaches within the G&T cohort but also alludes to the potential interplay of both structured teaching methods and innate abilities in shaping their academic success, contributing to the ongoing nature vs. nurture debate.

In summary, the collective insights underscore the multifaceted nature of giftedness and talent, encompassing academic achievement, specific characteristics, social-emotional aspects, and diverse learning approaches. The educators' perspectives contribute to a holistic understanding

that goes beyond prescribed definitions, encompassing various cognitive and affective characteristics.

Calls for more precise terminology

When discussing the use of terms like 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted and Talented,' a notable consensus among educators, with one exception, emphasises the pressing need for more inclusive terms while also recognising both the positive and negative aspects associated with using such labels. This collective agreement reflects a shared awareness that terminology preferred by teachers may fall short in promoting inclusivity. Participants such as John and Emily expressed their thoughts on the subjective nature of the terms and the necessity of seeking alternatives:

> *The term itself is subjective and varies from one school to another. In the context of the school, I continue to use these terms for lack of a better alternative. I am always open to finding a more inclusive and effective way to address these distinctions.* (John)

> *In my opinion, we should seek more inclusive terms. While these terms can offer valuable insights, it's essential to approach their usage with a nuanced perspective, considering both the positive and negative implication.* (Emily)

In contrast to the call for more inclusive terms, David offered a different perspective:

> *I think, instead of expending time and energy searching for alternative terms to replace 'gifted and talented' or 'more able,' our focus should be on exploring what provisions we can offer to these children.* (David)

John and Emily's emphasis on more inclusive language may stem from a recognition of the potential negative consequences of labelling some students such as 'High Achievers' or 'Gifted and Talented'. Their advocacy for inclusivity could be regarded as desire to create an educational environment that fosters unity rather than division among students. In their view, the current terminology may inadvertently create distinctions that could be exclusionary for other students.

On the other hand, David's focus on actionable solutions may imply a belief that the quest for a universally accepted, inclusive term may be challenging. He may perceive the diverse nature of educational contexts and individual student strengths as factors that make it difficult to find a single, widely applicable term. His proposal to concentrate on practical measures to benefit students could be interpreted as a more immediate and feasible approach, bypassing the potential complexities of redefining terminology.

Advantages

As stressed above, all participants emphasised the positive and negative aspects of employing these terms for various reasons. Focusing on the affirmative facets, Alex stated:

> *On the positive side, mentioning these terms in the classroom can boost the confidence of the students identified as high achievers. It helps them recognise and embrace their strengths. Also, I might use them when discussing with other staff members. For instance, saying 'he is a high achiever' or 'she's gifted and talented.' This allows for a more nuanced approach within the classroom. Students who are attuned to these discussions can understand that they are placed in certain areas because of their strengths, creating an environment conducive to their success.* (Alex)

David also shares a similarity with Alex and underscored the role of these terms, emphasising their potential benefits in tailoring educational approaches for the needs of high-achieving or gifted students while contributing to their self-awareness and motivation.

> *I believe these terms should primarily serve as tools for teachers in planning and assessment. The labels of 'more able' or 'gifted' should be used for educational purposes, aiding teachers in tailoring their approaches. It's not necessary to explicitly convey these labels to the children. Instead, the focus should be on the outcomes and the support provided to enhance their learning experience. On the positive side, these labels can serve as motivation, encouraging students to push themselves even further and recognising their abilities can instil a sense of pride and intrinsic motivation.* (David)

However, David differs from Alex in his stance on using these terms directly with the students. While Alex emphasises the direct use of such terms for these children, David believed they should primarily serve as tools for educators in planning the educational process. Similarly,

Sarah aligns with David's perspective, highlighting the potential advantages of these terms but avoiding explicit communication of the labels to students. In her statement, Sarah explains:

> *When reviewing data, I might mention the percentage of children working at greater depth. In planning activities, I might note that certain tasks are designed for high-ability students. It is more of an internal reference for me, ensuring that I am aware of everyone's academic level and tailoring tasks accordingly. While I may set goals for students, I do not explicitly tell them, 'You need to work at greater depth.' Instead, I might communicate to them that my expectation is for them to work at their current level and aim for greater depth as we progress.* (Sarah)

John also acknowledged:

> *Recognising individuals as more able or gifted can boost their self-efficacy, acknowledging their potential to work at a higher level*. (John)

This aligns with the collective sentiment of the participants, emphasising the positive impact of these terms on students' motivation and self-perception.

In conclusion, there is a consensus among the participants, with the exception of one teacher, that directly using terms like 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted and Talented' with students may not be advisable. However, beyond this caution, there is a collective recognition of the positive role these terms can play in a differentiation-centred approach, tailoring educational content based on students' strengths. This method, which avoids explicit labelling, emphasises internal references. Utilising these terms within this framework not only ensures tailored educational experiences but also brings about potential benefits such as increased motivation and self-awareness among the identified students group.

Disadvantages

Participants, while evaluating the potential negative effects of using these terms, reached a consensus that it is advisable not to use these terms directly in communication with students. The rationale behind this shared perspective is illuminated by David, who explained how students might interpret:

> *Students might interpret this information in a way that leads to complacency. Knowing they are already considered high achievers, some students might adopt a mindset that allows them to be more relaxed about their efforts, thinking they will inevitably succeed*. (David)

David's statement, expressing concern about students becoming complacent due to being labelled as high achievers, aligns with the developmental approach to giftedness and talent, as emphasised in the theoretical framework. According to this perspective, if necessary support is provided, the realisation of students' potential hinges on their active engagement and sincere interest in their own development (Subotnik Olszweski-Kubilius and Worrell, 2020; 2021). Continuing to explore other negative effects of usage, David also states:

> *There can be a tendency to overlook or under-prioritise more able students under the assumption that they will naturally excel.* (David)

In David's statement, he highlights the negative impact of this on teachers. Similarly, Emily addresses the inadequacy of using these terms and their potential negative effects on teachers in understanding children with varied needs and strengths:

> *Using such terms is not always beneficial because it might inadvertently limit our understanding of a child's needs. Assuming that a child who grasps concepts easily does not need as much support may result in neglecting certain situations where they do require assistance.* (Emily)

Alex, on the other hand, focuses on the impact of using these terms on other children, stating:

> *If a student hears that someone else is a high achiever and they are not, it might lead to a cognitive process where they start questioning their own abilities and self-belief.* (Alex)

In summary, the participants collectively advocate against the direct use of terms like 'High Achiever' or 'Gifted and Talented' with students. Their shared perspective is grounded in the recognition that employing these terms could potentially yield negative effects, impacting not only G&T children but also others, as well as fellow teachers. This caution is based on concerns related to complacency among students, the risk of overlooking diverse needs and strengths, and the inadvertent limitation of understanding each child's requirements.

Developmental aspect of definition

When participants explored the potential drawbacks associated with terms such as 'gifted and talented,' it became evident that they perceive these attributes as part of a developmental process. As highlighted earlier, the adopted approach to 'giftedness and talent' in this research resonates with this perspective. During discussions with participants about the nature of abilities and the debate surrounding nature versus nurture, this perspective was once again brought to light. All participants in this discussion assert that being gifted and talented results from the intricate interplay between genetic predispositions and environmental factors. They further emphasise that the varying degrees of influence from family, school, and teachers can positively or negatively impact this developmental process. For example, Emily stated:

> *I believe that genetic factors may contribute to a child's inherent ability, but it does not automatically guarantee high ability. The role of parental support is crucial in guiding a child's progress to reach their full potential. In some cases, even if a child possesses genetic predispositions, the level of support they receive can significantly influence their developmental trajectory. For instance, two children with similar genetic abilities may demonstrate different developmental outcomes if one receives adequate support while the other does not. This underscores the importance of the context and the impact of effective parenting and support on a child's overall development. Therefore, while genetic factors play a role, it's the combination of genetics and supportive parenting that often shapes the trajectory of high-ability or greater depth children.* (Emily)

Emily's perspective centres on minimising environmental factors, especially in the realm of parenting. While framing being gifted and talented as a developmental process, she predominantly focuses on family dynamics and underscores the role of parental support, leaving out considerations of teachers and schools. This trend of narrowing the discussion to parenting, while leaving the educational aspects unexplored, appears to be a common approach within this group. For instance, Sarah states:

> *I believe several factors contribute to the development of high-achieving children, and cultural capital within the family plays a significant role. In addition to cultural influences, effective parenting is crucial. Parents who actively encourage and challenge their children, providing extra support such as tutoring, can positively impact academic achievement. This support is evident in instances where students have successfully completed the 11-plus exam and gained admission to grammar schools. Time investment from parents is also noteworthy. While some children may possess natural*

> *gifts and talents, their potential might not be fully realised if they lack the extra support at home.* (Sarah)

It could be argued that, despite all of the teachers in this case addressing the interaction of genetic and environmental factors in the nature of ability, particularly in the realm of parenting, there appears to be a collective inclination among participants to regard environmental factors as more influential. It could indeed be argued that the collective inclination among participants to emphasise the influence of environmental factors, particularly in parenting, may find its roots in Alex's statement. He underscored:

> *The development of high-achiever students is significantly influenced by positive role models, and this impact can extend beyond parents to include grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters. Having such role models can shape a child's perspective and habits, fostering a routine of completing homework, engaging in productive activities, and cultivating a love for learning*. (Alex)

Given this study's focus on primary schools, primary students' limited exposure to diverse educators or settings may highlight the heightened importance of parents compared to secondary school students with broader educational experiences.

However, the question of why there is a difference in parenting approaches among participants has not been explicitly addressed. John takes a step further in his statement, suggesting that the level of support provided by parents correlates with the value they place on education.

> *In my opinion, it is likely a combination of both. In my experience working with numerous gifted and talented children, I have observed that parents often play a crucial role in fostering and nurturing their abilities. Cultural influences are significant, especially among South Asian communities. There's a strong emphasis on education within these cultures, and many parents act as driving forces behind their children's academic success. His cultural emphasis on education becomes a key factor, whether it is because the parents themselves highly value education or because they are highly skilled professionals pushing their children to excel. The common theme here is a deep understanding of the value of education and its potential to open doors socially, politically, and economically for their children.* (John)

Participants stressed the developmental nature of giftedness and talent, recognising both genetic predispositions and environmental factors. All participants emphasised the significance of environmental factors, especially in parenting, over genetics. John further suggested a correlation between parental support and the value placed on education, highlighting the

cultural emphasis in certain communities. Overall, unanimous acknowledgment prevailed regarding the intricate interplay between nature and nurture in shaping G&T children.

6.2.6 Discussion

The aim of this research is to investigate how teachers perceive and approach G&T children within their specific contexts. To achieve this goal, I have opted to utilise the case study methodology. This choice is supported by its effectiveness in addressing the research phenomenon, especially when there is ambiguity regarding the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context, as previously discussed in 'The case study' section (Yin, 2009). Subsequently, by forming different cases, I aimed to clarify the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context and concentrate more precisely on the research phenomenon. In this regard, I developed three distinct cases and provided exemplification of a case that was considered not subject to any criteria that may potentially impact the quality of educational services provided for G&T children. Building upon the within-case analyses conducted earlier, I will now conduct a cross-case analysis to explore any similarities and differences among these cases. This approach allows for a comprehensive examination of patterns and variations across the cases, enabling deeper insights into the research phenomenon.

During the cross-case analysis, a compelling pattern consistently surfaces across all three cases related to terminology teachers employed to refer to G&T children. Regardless of their unique contexts, teachers demonstrated a strong preference for terms with deep roots in either former policy documents ('Gifted and Talented') or current assessment frameworks used by Ofsted ('More Able,' 'Most Able,' Higher Prior Attaining,' and 'High Achiever') or the National Curriculum Assessment ('Greater Depth') (DfES, 2001; Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Ofsted, 2013; Loft *et al*., 2020; Gov.uk, 2023b). Furthermore, the diverse terminology employed by teachers to characterise this group underscores the inherent ambiguity within gifted education terminology (White *et al*., 2003; Smedsrud, 2020), likely influenced by the absence of a clear definitional consensus in the field and the perception that certain terms are either elitist or overly restrictive in scope (Subotnik, Olszewski-Kubilius and Worrell, 2011).

It is noteworthy that, apart from Littlewood Primary School, none of the other schools participating in this research had specific policies addressing G&T children. Littlewood Primary School's Inclusion Policy includes a specific section for 'More Able' children. However, Lily, who participated in my research from this school, preferred the term 'Higher Prior Attaining Children.' In Case L, which encompasses three schools including Littlewood Primary School, evaluations were conducted by Ofsted using different terms for this cohort. Despite the presence of assessments related to G&T children using terms like 'More Able' or 'Most Able' in the Ofsted inspection reports of the schools within Case L, none of the teachers in this case referred to this group using the terms found in the Ofsted reports. This suggests that while teachers participating in this research consistently favour terms rooted in past policies or current assessment frameworks, their terminology preferences for referring to G&T children differed from the policies documented in their schools. This can be seen as an example of how having a policy and enacting policy are distinct, particularly within the realm of teachers' preferred terms (Maguire and Hoskins, 2011).

When it comes to how teachers conceptualised the term 'gifted and talented,' the distribution of this conceptualisation among cases did not show a correlation. For example, in Case L and Calypso Primary School, none of the teachers included the idea of possessing abilities in non-academic areas in their conceptualisation of the term. On the other hand, in other cases, some teachers included this aspect while others did not. Sternberg highlights that 'giftedness and talent' are socially constructed terms reflecting socio-cultural values in a given time and context (2008). Thus, it can be suggested that there was no discernible relationship between the school-based criteria I incorporated when formulating these cases and the teachers' conceptualisation of the term. However, this could further be evaluated within a broader contextual framework: When there was a policy and provision available for this cohort in England, it entailed selecting between 5% to 10% of the student population from schools (Machin *et al*., 2004). This approach encouraged teachers to utilise measurable methods such as IQ measurement or academic achievement assessment instead of focusing on different areas of ability (Koshy and Pinheiro-Torres, 2013). The emphasis on academic domains may also represent a lasting impact from the past to the present on teachers' conceptualisation of the term.

Another common pattern across cases was that teachers struggled to reach a unified understanding of giftedness and talent. Their definitions often encompassed both cognitive and

affective characteristics. Furthermore, teachers described a variety of characteristics when discussing giftedness and talent, aligning with literature that suggests the abilities and qualities defining gifted and talented children are unique to each individual (Davis and Rimm, 2014). Additionally, while all participants associated cognitive skills with these children, few focused on effective characteristics, highlighting the close relationship between cognitive abilities and achievement, supported by existing literature (Kuncel *et al*., 2004). Besides, while all teachers generally discussed positive aspects when referring to giftedness and talent, few included negative characteristics. This is consistent with the prevailing literature, indicating that teachers commonly associate 'giftedness and talent' with more positive characteristics (Moon, and Brighton, 2008).

Across all cases, except for two teachers, it also emerged as a common pattern that there was an inclination among participants to seek alternative terms instead of the ones they typically preferred, for various reasons. While two teachers aligned with Borland's perspective of addressing genuine educational challenges to meet the needs of all students, prioritising individual needs over defining G&T categories, the remaining participants emphasised the necessity of using specific terms to refer to G&T children (Borland, 2005). These terms, they argued, were valuable tools for highlighting differences among students and incorporating them into lesson planning, aligning with the literature that emphasises considering students' individual readiness, interests, and learning profiles when differentiating lessons (Tomlinson, 2014). While underscoring the significance of employing these terms, three primary concerns emerged across all cases, aligning with findings in the literature. Firstly, there is a concern that labelled students, whether implicitly or explicitly assigned, may feel restricted by their label and thus avoid challenges that could jeopardise their perceived status as gifted and talented individuals. This could negatively impact their motivation for learning and their willingness to take risks (Dweck, 2007). Secondly, the usage of terms such as 'Gifted and Talented' to refer to this cohort has been criticised for oversimplifying students' abilities and potential (Berlin, 2009). Thirdly, the adoption of these terms may result in the creation of divisions among students (Geake and Gross, 2008). This perspective aligns with England's policies regarding gifted education, which reflect an egalitarian approach, focusing on inclusive education principles rather than specific labelling, ensuring equal opportunities for all students (Heuser *et al*., 2017). The insights provided by these educators can be interpreted as a result of this policy context, highlighting the broader collective commitment to fostering inclusivity and equality within the education system.

The final recurring pattern, relevant to all cases, concerns the ongoing debate about nature versus nurture. Participants demonstrated varying inclinations, some emphasising genetic influences while others prioritised environmental factors. However, reflecting established views in the field, a strong consensus emerged among participants: they acknowledged that 'giftedness and talent' is not fixed traits but rather developmental processes (Gagné, 1995; Feldman, 2003; Subotnik *et al.*, 2011). However, here teachers generally emphasised the significance of environmental factors, particularly in parenting, over genetics. The emphasis on the significance of environmental factors over genetics exhibited consistent parity across all cases. Similar findings have been reported by Brighton *et al*., (2007) who found that "Teachers, in general, believed that the most important factors contributing to students being recognised as gifted come from exposure to stimulating events at home or from their parents." (p. 34)

6.3 Challenges faced by teachers in implementing Gifted Education

6.3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to explore challenges teachers encounter in the implementation of gifted education. It explores both overarching policy-related issues and specific hurdles encountered by individual teachers within the educational landscape. The exploration begins by addressing 'Policy oriented general challenges', emphasising overarching issues perceived by participants as hurdles in gifted education. Two subthemes emerge: 'Undermined support for G&T Children' and 'Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education'. These subthemes highlight the discrepancy between the inclusive rhetoric of educational policies and the practical challenges faced by teachers in catering to the diverse needs of G&T children.

Moving forward, the focus shifts to 'Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities'. Subthemes as 'Parental involvement', 'Resources', 'Time', and 'Teacher Education' elucidate the multifaceted challenges faced by teachers, which can vary significantly depending on the unique context of each school and teachers' backgrounds. Through this exploration, the aim is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles impeding effective gifted education implementation. The identified themes are as follows:

- Policy oriented general challenges
    - Undermined support for G&T Children
    - Policy not working in tandem with gifted education
- Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities:
    - Resources
    - Time
    - Parental involvement
    - Teacher Education

6.3.2 Case L

Policy Oriented general challenge in Gifted Education

In England, gifted education is embedded within the mainstream school system fostering an inclusive learning environment (Heuser *et al*., 2017). All teachers in this case, Liam, Lily, and Luke, voiced their strong support for this approach:

> *I believe in inclusive education. Separating gifted students from their peers may not always be the best approach. Inclusive education promotes diversity and allows students with mixed abilities to learn from one another. It is a more holistic and enriching educational experience, and it fosters a sense of community and understanding among students of different abilities.* (Liam)

> *I lean towards keeping children in mixed ability classes. The benefits of fostering diversity, promoting peer learning, and preventing segregation in classrooms outweigh the potential disadvantages.* (Lily)

> *It is an integral part of inclusive education, encompassing a diverse range of students and their unique needs, which makes it both a fulfilling and dynamic endeavour.* (Luke)

However, despite their support for the inclusive approach, the teachers also acknowledged the challenges it presents in effectively meeting the needs of all students, particularly G&T students. For instance, Liam highlighted the difficulty of tailoring lessons to cater to a wide range of abilities within a single class:

> *At times, I experience moments of concern and even mild panic. When I feel that the content I have prepared may not be challenging enough for gifted students.* (Liam)

Similarly, Luke and Lily pointed out the pressure to keep G&T children stimulated with a constant supply of new and challenging activities:

> *The main challenge I encounter is the constant need for a variety of engaging activities. These students are often quick learners and have a hunger for new tasks and challenges.* (Luke)

> *Due to the mixed ability classroom setting, it can be challenging for teachers to cater to the needs of high prior attaining children.* (Lily)

Case L exemplifies the ongoing tension in gifted education within England's inclusive mainstream schools. While teachers endorse inclusivity, the challenge of effectively meeting the needs of G&T children remains paramount.

Undermined support for G&T Children

In this discussion, both Liam and Lily shed light on the challenges faced by G&T children within the educational system, suggesting that their support may be undermined. Liam expressed uncertainty regarding specific government policies directly addressing G&T children. However, he acknowledged the broader context of education policies, suggesting that G&T children may not always receive the attention they deserve:

> *I am not entirely sure about specific government policies related to gifted students. However, I understand that these policies often fall under the broader umbrella of inclusive education policies. I recognise that they are a part of the education system, and they hold significance in ensuring the development of all students including gifted students. However, in practice, there is often an expectation to focus more on less able students and to bring them up to the level of their peers, while gifted students may be overlooked.* (Liam)

Lily's comments further emphasised the practical challenges faced by educators in providing support for G&T children.

> *Naturally, I find myself dedicating more time to students who are working at lower levels, especially in a primary classroom where additional support staff may not be available, and I serve as the class teacher.* (Lily)

These discussions point towards a potential gap between policy and practice in gifted education. While inclusive education policies may aim to support all students, the reality in classrooms suggests that G&T children' needs might be under-served.

Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education

This subtheme highlights the challenges participants grapple with, presenting various policy examples that underscore the negative impact of these regulations on gifted education. In this context, among the teachers, only Lily pointed out a policy direction aligning with these concerns:

> *School-specific policies can significantly influence the educational approach for high-prior-attaining children. For example, the pressure to perform well in league tables and publish results can lead schools to prioritise students who are working at a greater depth, which might inadvertently neglect the needs of high prior attaining children. One potential concern is that the desire to achieve higher scores in end-of-key-stage assessments might lead to the temptation to focus intensely on a select group of students, potentially neglecting the broader needs of gifted and talented students.* (Lily)

League tables, which rank schools based on standardised test scores, can be a source of external pressure (Machin and Vignoles, 2006). As Lily highlighted, this pressure can lead to a narrow definition of giftedness and talent. Schools focused solely on league tables might overlook G&T students with diverse strengths, hindering the identification and support they need to flourish.

Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities

The previous themes explored the general challenges associated with gifted education within an inclusive framework. While these discussions highlighted overarching policy issues, the focus now shifts to the specific challenges encountered by teachers in their day-to-day practice. These challenges, while interconnected, can manifest differently depending on the teacher's experience, resources, and the specific student population.

Parental involvement

As previously emphasised, Ofsted praised schools in this case for their notable feature of fostering close collaboration between parents, caregivers, and the school community (for further details, revisit the 'Description of cases' section). This emphasis on partnership is further reflected in the positive experiences with parental involvement reported by the teachers. None of the teachers viewed parental involvement as a significant challenge. Instead, their comments painted a picture of a mutually supportive environment:

> *It is not uncommon for parents of gifted students to seek private tutors or specialised programmes outside of school to support their children's educational needs.* (Liam)

> *We also encourage parents to inform us about any achievements or activities their children participate in outside of school, such as earning badges, and we celebrate these achievements within the school community.* (Lily)

> *The identification process starts with either classroom teacher nomination or parental nomination when we suspect that a student might be gifted. When we identify such students, we refer them to experts for further assessment.* (Luke)

Collectively, the insights provided by teachers underscore the notable strength of the schools examined in this case study: their collaborative approach to parental involvement within an inclusive framework for G&T children. Thus, parental involvement did not emerge as a challenge in this case; instead, teachers acknowledged and supported parental efforts, actively sought parental input, and collaborated on the identification of G&T students.

Resources

In this case, none of the teachers raised concerns regarding resource inadequacy for catering to the needs of G&T children. Liam highlighted the convenience of accessing materials through the internet and national educational platforms:

> *I do not face any difficulties in sourcing materials. Thanks to the internet, I can access a wide range of resources, especially through national educational platforms.* (Liam)

Similarly, Luke said:

> *In today's digital age, the internet provides an abundance of resources that teachers can readily access, making lesson planning more efficient.* (Luke)

However, despite this abundance, Lily highlighted the challenge of finding resources specifically tailored to the needs of G&T children:

> *Finding suitable resources like books, materials, and lesson activities for high prior attainer children in my classroom can sometimes require extra effort. It may involve additional research, adaptation of existing materials, or even creating new content from scratch. Therefore, flexibility and customisation are often necessary.* (Lily)

This case study reveals a dual aspect regarding resources for gifted education. While technology offers access to a vast pool of materials, teachers still encounter challenges in finding resources customised for the specific needs of G&T children. This underscores the importance of strategies that promote resource flexibility, adaptability, and potentially even the creation of specialised curriculum materials for G&T children.

Time

Time constraints pose a significant challenge for teachers in effectively catering to the needs of G&T children within this case. Liam exemplified a proactive approach, strategically allocating focused attention to G&T students while ensuring all students receive support:

> *I do not feel guilty at all about making special preparations for them. It is about finding the right balance. For instance, if a group of gifted students requires 20 minutes of focused attention, I allocate my time accordingly. I may work with them individually because they can manage the more advanced material, while still providing equal attention to all students, including those with special needs.* (Liam)

Lily's experience, however, highlighted the difficulty in finding sufficient time for differentiation:

> *Finding the time to adequately differentiate lessons for high prior attainers can be challenging.* (Lily)

This scarcity of time may stem from various factors such as limited planning time, large class sizes, or competing demands from other students. Luke acknowledged the demanding nature of teaching, stating:

> *Teaching is a demanding profession that often extends beyond classroom hours. In addition to the regular teaching duties, there is always extra work like paperwork, resource gathering, and lesson planning. Dedicating a little extra time to prepare for gifted students does add to the workload, but it can ultimately make a significant difference in their learning experience.* (Luke)

Luke also recognised the variability of time constraints:

> *Sometimes, I find myself in a position where time is limited due to the need to cover specific curriculum content or attend to other students' needs. However, during certain periods of the year, I have more flexibility and time to focus on meeting the needs of gifted students.* (Luke)

These insights highlight the complex nature of managing time effectively to cater to the diverse needs of students, including G&T children. While some teachers demonstrate proactive strategies to address time constraints, others face challenges in finding adequate time for lesson planning and preparation, especially when catering to the needs of G&T children. This underscores the importance of school support and effective time management strategies to

alleviate time constraints and ensure that all students receive the attention and support they require for their academic growth and development.

Teacher Education

The perspectives shared by Liam, Lily, and Luke shed light on the challenges related to teacher education and continuing professional development/in-service programme in the context of gifted education. Liam focuses on the shortcomings of ITE programmes. He emphasised the lack of dedicated focus on gifted education compared to special education:

> *I believe the most significant issue in the education of gifted students is the lack of inclusion in primary school teacher training. It is noteworthy that, during my PGCE, there was a dedicated path for special education, but the same emphasis was not given to gifted education. While gifted education might be included under the umbrella of special education, it often lacks the comprehensive focus it truly deserves. As a result, most teachers lack the experience and training required to effectively address the unique needs of gifted students.* (Liam)

Additionally, he emphasised the significant gap in teacher education concerning differentiation and gifted education, indicating a deficiency in skills necessary to effectively cater to the need of all students including G&T children:

> *Unfortunately, differentiation is often overlooked in teacher training, and this applies not only to gifted students but also to non-gifted ones.* (Liam)

Lily, on the other hand, pointed out the importance of subject knowledge and pedagogical techniques as ongoing needs for all teachers:

> *Subject knowledge is another issue, as it is essential to ensure that my subject knowledge is up to date and accurate to effectively teach higher prior attaining. Thus, the primary challenges are time constraints and the need for continuous subject knowledge development.* (Liam)

Regarding his own education experience, Luke mentioned the limited coverage of gifted education:

> *During my teacher training course, there were components that covered the education of gifted students, although I do not recall it being a primary focus.* (Luke)

Luke proposed a potential solution to the teacher education gap:

> *While it is challenging to cover all aspects of teaching gifted students in a training course, focusing on general strategies and procedures for identifying and guiding them could be a valuable addition to teacher training programmes.* (Luke)

In summary, this case underscores the persistent challenge: these schools, lauded by Ofsted for their teaching quality and professional development opportunities (for further details, revisit the 'Description of cases' section), still face gaps in preparing teachers for gifted education. This highlights the need for a comprehensive approach encompassing both strong foundational knowledge incorporated in ITE programmes and targeted, ongoing specific professional development opportunities to ensure teachers are well-equipped to nurture the potential of all their students including G&T children.

6.3.3. Case M

Policy oriented general challenge in Gifted Education

All teachers in this case shared reservations regarding the practicality of achieving genuine inclusivity within mixed ability classrooms. Megan and Melissa voiced significant concerns about its feasibility, especially in the context of large classes with limited resource:

> *One of the significant challenges in educating gifted and talented students in a classroom is the diversity of talents and needs among the students. As a teacher, you must cater to a wide range of abilities, and this can be a demanding task. I do not think it is feasible to do it effectively in a class of 30 children with only one teacher.* (Megan)

> *Inclusive education is undoubtedly admirable, yet it places significant strain on teachers who must navigate the diverse needs of all students.* (Melissa)

Both Megan and Melissa implicitly acknowledged the difficulty of tailoring lessons to cater to a wide range of abilities within the classroom. This difficulty creates a tension between the policy of inclusive education and the need to effectively address the specific needs of G&T children. Michelle offered a more nuanced perspective, recognising the challenges of mixed ability classrooms while acknowledging potential benefits:

> *Teaching a mix of more able students alongside those with varied abilities can be very challenging. While it requires careful planning and resourcefulness.it also offers a rich environment for peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.* (Michelle)

Mary presented a contrasting viewpoint, suggesting that separation by ability in certain subjects could be beneficial for G&T children:

> *I recall working in an outstanding school that separated students based on abilities in different subjects, which I believe could be beneficial for better catering to high achievers.* (Mary)

The findings of this case highlight the complexity of balancing inclusive education with the needs of G&T children. While some teachers focus on the challenges, others acknowledge both the challenges and potential benefits of mixed ability settings. Melissa also suggested that grouping children according to their abilities might be advantageous for these children.

Undermined support for G&T Children

In the current policy context of England, teachers in this case voiced concerns regarding the insufficiencies of the existing system in adequately meeting the needs of all students, particularly G&T children. Megan argued that the focus on bringing lower-achieving students up to par can come at the expense of G&T children' needs.

> *While education policy aims to provide a high-quality education for all students, it can sometimes lead to a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not adequately address the unique needs of gifted and talented children. This policy strives for equality, but it is essential to consider that students are not all the same; they are unique. So, these policies can have a mixed impact on the education of gifted and talented students.* (Megan)

Mary's experience echoed these concerns. While her school embraces inclusion, she observed a potential conflict where the emphasis on raising the achievement of lower-ability students takes precedence:

> *Our school, like many others, has embraced this inclusive approach. However, there is a consideration that this inclusive strategy may pose some drawbacks for the high achiever population as the general expectation often prioritises bringing less able students up to the level of their peers first.* (Mary)

Melissa's experience pointed out the practical difficulties faced by teachers in inclusive classrooms:

> *Teachers approach the education of these students from an inclusive education perspective, employing differentiation methods based on their own knowledge and experience. I do not think that the school specifically highlights and evaluates the educational needs of these students, apart from various clubs provided by the school, there is not a dedicated focus on addressing the educational needs of these student.* (Melisa)

Michelle expressed uncertainty about government policies concerning G&T children but shares observations from a recent inspection:

> *To be honest, my knowledge about government policy for more able children is limited. During our Ofsted inspection last year, the focus was on ensuring that these students were appropriately challenged and that their learning needs were considered on par with the rest of the students. However, during the inspection, Ofsted seemed more interested in the performance of the bottom 20%.* (Michelle)

Together, these perspectives highlight concerns about the potential undermining of support for G&T children within the education system, stemming from policy priorities, implementation practices, and inspection frameworks.

Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education

In our discussion focusing on gifted education and its interaction with policies that either overlap or impede its progress, insights from two educators, Megan and Michelle, highlighted how curriculum policies can act as a barrier to fostering the diverse talents of G&T children:

> *Some teachers may find it challenging to implement practices for gifted and talented students due to strict curriculum reform policies. These policies often emphasise teaching basic subjects and may not allow for a focus on other ability areas, which can limit the opportunities for gifted students to explore and excel in their specific talents.* (Megan)

> *I believe the current structure of the curriculum, particularly in subjects like math, science, history, and geography, heavily focuses on knowledge and facts. While it is claimed that the curriculum is not purely factual, in practice, it often feels quite content heavy. More able children, in my experience, enjoy delving into this content and desire to explore and apply it to various contexts. However, the packed curriculum leaves little room for such exploration and creativity.* (Michelle)

Both teachers' concerns about strict curriculum policies converge on a critical point: the prioritisation of core subjects. This emphasis can inadvertently neglect opportunities for G&T children to explore and excel in their diverse talents, which may lie outside these core areas. As a consequence, the learning environment may become stifled, hindering the full potential of G&T children.

Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities

Parental involvement

In this case, Mary did not perceive parental involvement as a problem and stated the following regarding the parents of G&T children:

> *Meetings with parents of high achievers tend to be straightforward and positive, as achievements are typically a source of pride. However, we remain attentive to potential social development challenges, acknowledging that these may require attention even if academic performance is excellent. Overall, the meetings with parents of high achievers are generally pleasant and focused on collaboration for continued success.* (Mary)

Michelle expressed a perspective on parental involvement, either positive or negative. However, Megan and Melissa had the following to say:

> *I have observed that the level of ability can significantly differ. It is partly associated with socio-economic status, as children from more affluent backgrounds often have access to better schools with well-qualified teachers and potentially more advantageous parenting resources, like access to educational support and research opportunities.* (Megan)

> *When it comes to parents, many face challenges in supporting their children due to financial constraints or time limitations. We try to support parents by providing guidance but sometimes it does not work.* (Melissa)

This case reveals the nuanced interplay between parental involvement and socioeconomic factors in gifted education. While Mary noted positive collaboration with parents of G&T children, Megan and Melissa highlighted challenges faced by those from disadvantaged backgrounds. These findings underscore the need for targeted resources and flexible engagement strategies to foster a supportive environment for all G&T children, irrespective of their family's socioeconomic status.

Resources

In discussing the availability and adequacy of resources for G&T children, Mary and Megan provided contrasting perspectives. Mary expressed gratitude for the resources available to her, leveraging the vast landscape of the internet and drawing on the expertise within her school community:

> *When it comes to resourcing for high-achiever students, I am fortunate not to encounter significant challenges. Research-wise, I navigate the vast landscape of the Internet and utilise a variety of books. Additionally, the expertise within our school community, comprising subject leaders and experienced educators, proves invaluable.* (Mary)

In contrast, Megan recounted her initial struggles with finding suitable resources tailored to the diverse needs of gifted and talented students. She noted the limitations of standardised lessons and the challenges of accessing resources accommodating various levels and learning styles. However, she acknowledged growth and adaptation over time:

> *When I initially began teaching, I encountered issues with finding suitable resources such as books, materials, and lesson activities for gifted and talented students. Many of the existing lessons were quite standardised and did not cater to the diverse needs of different students. It was more of a one-size-fits-all approach. As a result, I faced challenges in accessing resources that could accommodate various levels and learning styles. This created a problem in finding appropriate resources for these students. However, based on my gained insights and experiences I've gained over time, it is not a big challenge for me right now.* (Megan)

Meanwhile, Melissa and Michelle provided insights into specific subject areas where resource challenges may arise. Melissa highlighted the constraint of pre-set resources, particularly when they can not be modified for G&T children. She emphasised the challenge of finding resources that can be tailored to meet the diverse needs of students:

> *Our resources are usually pre-set, and as a teacher, I must adhere to those materials during the lesson. If I cannot modify them for G&T children, it becomes a challenge. Thus, finding resources can be challenging.* (Melissa)

Michelle offered examples from different subject areas, noting both successes and ongoing challenges:

> *In the foundation subjects, teachers excel at creating open-ended tasks, such as applying historical concepts to critical writing. This poses a challenge for more able children, providing them with tasks that stretch their capabilities. In mathematics, we have a range of resources, which offer reasoning and problem-solving materials. However, where teachers often encounter difficulty is in designing effective writing lessons. We have recently implemented a new writing curriculum with a specific focus on ensuring that we appropriately challenge more able children, and so far, it has proven to be quite effective.* (Michelle)

The divergent experiences of teachers underscore the complex interplay between time constraints, resource availability, and instructional efficacy in gifted education. While some educators adeptly navigate these challenges, others encounter significant hurdles in their efforts to meet the needs of G&T children. Overall, the spectrum of experiences highlights the importance of tailored support, strategic planning, and collaborative efforts to effectively address time constraints and optimise educational outcomes for G&T students.

Time

The issue of time constraints in gifted education reveals a fascinating spectrum of experiences among teachers. While some, like Megan and Michelle, appear to navigate this challenge with relative ease, others, like Mary and Melissa, view it as a significant hurdle. Interestingly, in the previous theme on resource availability, Megan expressed no difficulty in finding materials, while Michelle emphasised the adequacy of school resources. This suggests that they might be adept at managing time constraints through efficient instructional practices. Perhaps they leverage existing resources effectively, collaborate with colleagues to share materials, or utilise readily available online resources.

The contrasting experiences of Megan and Michelle, who appeared to handle time constraints adeptly, with those of Mary and Melissa, who perceived it as a significant obstacle, underscore the diverse challenges teachers face in gifted education. While Megan and Michelle demonstrate proficiency in managing time through effective instructional practices and resource utilisation, Mary and Melissa expressed the difficulties of balancing various responsibilities and expectations, particularly in creating tailored work for G&T students:

> *After the COVID-19 pandemic, a multitude of challenges has emerged in the classroom, impacting both the social and academic needs of students. Among these challenges, the most significant challenge I face in educating high achievers is the constraint of time. Juggling various responsibilities and expectations makes it challenging to carve out dedicated time for creating additional, tailored work to meet the unique needs of high achievers.* (Mary)

> *Academic challenges are prevalent, requiring careful planning to address the diverse needs of talented students. This, of course, presents a time-related challenge. Preparing differentiated materials and assessments demands time and effort....The main issue arises when time becomes a constraint. For instance, when preparing for differentiated lessons, an extra time investment is necessary due to the unique approach we follow.* (Melissa)

What emerges from the findings reported here is that teachers in gifted education face a complex interplay of challenges, with time constraints playing a pivotal role. While some teachers, like Megan and Michelle, demonstrated adeptness in managing these constraints through efficient instructional practices and resource utilisation, others, such as Mary and Melissa, found themselves struggling to balance various responsibilities and expectations.

Teacher Education

The perspectives of Mary, Megan, Melissa, and Michelle on teacher education for gifted education reveal a diverse landscape. Mary feels confident teaching G&T children. This confidence stems from both experience and the robust support system within her school, as evidenced by designated subject leaders who create specialised learning materials. This highlighted the positive impact of well-structured school environments on teacher efficacy:

> *I feel confident in my ability to teach high-achiever students in my classroom. This confidence is not solely a product of my experience but is significantly bolstered by the robust support system within our school. We have designated subject leaders, experts in various fields, who play a pivotal role in creating challenging and enriching materials tailored for high achievers.* (Mary)

Megan's experience contrasted with Mary's. Her past education, including courses and professional development, has not significantly influenced her approach to G&T children. This raises concerns about the quality and effectiveness of some existing education programmes:

> *My past training, including courses and professional development, has not significantly influenced my approach to educating gifted and talented children. I believe that teacher training should cover various aspects, including adaptive teaching, which should be part of the curriculum. Practical application of adaptive teaching, where teachers plan lessons tailored to students' diverse needs, would be highly beneficial. However, this aspect was not adequately covered in my past training.* (Megan)

Melissa acknowledged the benefit of her past education, particularly in the context of young learner courses, where characteristics of different children, including G&T children were discussed. However, she noted the limited depth of coverage on this aspect in her education:

> *My past training has been beneficial, especially in the context of young learner courses. In these courses, we touch upon the characteristics of different children, including gifted and talented. However, the depth of coverage is limited, as we only dedicate a week or so to this aspect in a four-month course.* (Melissa)

Michelle highlighted the collaborative culture in her current school, where teachers are encouraged to seek help and share best practices:

> *The environment and culture at my school foster collaboration and the sharing of best practices. We embrace an open-door policy for all teachers, encouraging them to seek help when faced with challenges in challenging more able students. Regular phase meetings and staff meetings provide opportunities to discuss issues collectively, and over the years, this collaborative approach has been invaluable in gathering ideas from colleagues.* (Michelle)

The experiences of Mary, Megan, Melissa, and Michelle unveil a divergent landscape in teacher education for G&T children. While Mary and Michelle benefited from a supportive school environment, Megan expressed dissatisfaction with her past education. Melissa highlighted the limited depth of her education, echoing the sentiment of Mary and herself regarding the necessity for specialised training. These varied perspectives underscore the need for a more cohesive and comprehensive approach to teacher education in the realm of gifted education. It is worth noting that Ofsted, previously commended the professional development opportunities available in schools in this case (for further details, revisit the 'Description of cases' section). This suggests that some schools are indeed providing valuable support for G&T teachers. However, the experiences of Megan and Melissa highlight that such positive examples are not widespread.

6.3.4 Case A

Policy oriented challenge in Gifted Education

All teachers in this case acknowledged the benefits of inclusive approach whist educating G&T children. Aspal emphasised the enriching experience for the entire class, fostering peer learning and inspiration:

> *Having students with diverse abilities in the same classroom can be beneficial for the entire school and the class as a whole. It creates an environment where students can learn from and inspire one another*. (Aspal)

Ava echoed this sentiment, highlighting the enriched learning experience for all students and the professional challenge that keeps her engaged:

> *This diversity not only enriches the learning experience for all students but also challenges me as an educator to better meet their individual needs.* (Ava)

Adam said:

> *Teaching gifted students with mixed abilities in a state primary school can be challenging, but it is also an opportunity to foster inclusivity and promote diverse learning experiences.* (Adam)

Despite the acknowledged benefits, teachers also emphasised the challenges, particularly regarding meeting the diverse needs within the classroom. Aspal identified the core issue: balancing the needs of all students. While ensuring basic education for those who might struggle, he also recognised the necessity to challenge G&T children:

> *With the presence of gifted students in the class, it becomes challenging to meet the diverse needs of all students. On one hand, you need to ensure that the less able or talented students are not left behind. On the other hand, you also have to avoid holding back the more talented students and provide them with opportunities to further their learning*. (Aspal)

Adam reinforced this challenge, highlighting the difficulty of catering to vastly different learning paces:

> *Gifted children often learn the material much earlier than their classmates. It is a real challenge to educate children with such different learning levels in the same class.* (Adam)

Here is where the key difference in perspectives emerges. While Aspal and Adam discussed the challenge within the existing framework, Ava brought attention to the lack of specific policies targeting gifted education in England. She stated:

> *As for the school's general educational policy, we are very sensitive to creating an inclusive classroom environment and fostering diversity, but there is no separate section or policy specifically dedicated to gifted students. This absence of a clear roadmap or policy for better support and targeting of these students hinders the development of these children's talents.* (Ava)

While all the teachers in this case acknowledged the advantages of the current inclusive approach in promoting diverse learning environments, they also highlighted its limitations. The challenge lies in effectively meeting the varied needs within a single classroom. Ava, in particular, emphasised the difficulty of addressing these diverse needs without clear policies specifically targeting G&T students.

Undermined support for G&T Children

In the ongoing dialogue concerning the nurturing of G&T children, teachers expressed apprehensions about policies and practices that could unintentionally hinder these students' educational opportunities. Ava highlighted disparity in attention between G&T children and their peers in the classroom:

> *The discrepancy in student numbers between gifted and typical students in the classroom necessitates that a greater portion of my time is devoted to the latter group, primarily to elevate their performance to match that of their peers.* (Ava)

Compounding this challenge is the current emphasis on a one-size-fits-all approach in classrooms, as observed by Adam:

> *What I have noticed is that sometimes going into classrooms, just general classrooms, there is an expectation sometimes of 30 children and one approach to the subject. What I see is that sometimes lots of the children are not engaging, they are less focused, they are falling asleep, and that is not the fault of the teacher.* (Adam)

In conclusion, the concerns raised by teachers underscore the need for a more nuanced approach to supporting G&T children within educational systems. As highlighted by Ava and Adam current policies and practices may inadvertently overlook the needs of G&T children, potentially hindering their academic growth and fulfilment.

Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education

In this case, two teachers, Ava and Aspal, discussed two policies hindering the effectiveness of provisions for G&T children. Aspal draws attention to the policies in England where students are typically not allowed to fail or repeat a year, and grade skipping is not common:

> *In England, students usually are not allowed to fail or repeat a year. Also, grade skipping is not common. While this policy ensures that students' progress through the general education system year by year, it can have a negative impact on gifted students. These students, who may be academically advanced compared to their peers, might not be sufficiently challenged in the classroom.* (Aspal)

On the other hand, Ava highlights the pressure from Ofsted and other external evaluations, which sometimes leads educators to prioritise documenting students' successes over genuinely enhancing the development of G&T children:

> *The pressure from Ofsted and other external evaluations sometimes makes us more focused on documenting students' successes rather than genuinely enhancing the achievements of our G&T students. This pressure creates significant stress for teachers and, at times, leads us to be risk-averse, fearing that low scores may result from implementing innovative methods.* (Ava)

In conclusion, the insights from Ava and Aspal highlighted the challenges educators encounter in effectively meeting the needs of G&T children within the existing policy framework. Aspal's observations underscored the potential negative impact of policies in England that restrict students from failing or repeating a year, as well as the rarity of grade skipping, suggesting they may not adequately challenge G&T children. Conversely, Ava pointed out the pressure from external evaluations, such as Ofsted, which may lead educators to prioritise compliance over genuine enhancement of G&T students' achievements.

Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities

Parental involvement

In this case, Adam and Aspal perceived parental involvement as a challenge. Adam said:

> *It is essential to foster strong collaboration with parents. Maintaining an open and ongoing dialogue about the progress and development of the G&T children is crucial. However, in some cases, such collaboration is challenging, especially when children come from difficult or traumatic family backgrounds. These circumstances limit the capacity of parents to provide the attention and support their gifted and talented children need.* (Adam)

Adam emphasised the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents. Strong parental support plays a vital role in the success of G&T students. However, he also acknowledged the challenges associated with such collaboration, particularly when students come from difficult or traumatic family backgrounds. On the other hand, Aspal highlighted the broader issue of parental involvement and its potential impact on the educational outcomes of G&T students:

> *Parental involvement is another challenge. We do not know much about how parents support and push their children to excel in their studies can vary greatly, and this can affect the educational outcomes of the more able and talented students as well.* (Aspal)

Overall, both Adam and Aspal recognised the importance of parental involvement in supporting G&T students but approached the topic from slightly different angles. While Adam focused on the challenges associated with collaboration, especially in challenging family circumstances, Aspal highlighted the general variability in parental support and its potential impact on educational outcomes.

Resources

The issue of finding a recourse for G&T children merges as a complex one in this case. The perspectives of Aspal, Ava, and Adam vary significantly. Aspal appeared confident in the accessibility of resources, citing access to a variety of books in the school library and the ability to gather data and materials from fellow teachers:

> *In terms of finding resources, such as books, materials, and lesson activities for gifted students, we do not face significant problems. We have access to a variety of books in the school library, and we can also gather data and resources from other teachers in the school who have taught similar topics in previous years.* (Aspal)

In contrast, Ava acknowledges encountering challenges in finding suitable resources tailored to the needs of G&T students. She noted a limited availability of materials and activities specifically designed to meet their needs:

> *I do encounter challenges in finding suitable resources for G&T students in my classroom. Unfortunately, there is a limited availability of materials and activities tailored to their specific needs.* (Ava)

Meanwhile, Adam expressed confidence in the availability of resources, stating that there are always opportunities to access them and that he does not encounter problems related to this issue:

> *There are always opportunities to access resources, so I do not have a problem related to this issue.* (Adam)

These differing perspectives highlight the nuanced nature of resource availability for G&T children. This case highlights the diverse experiences of teachers, ranging from those with access to a variety of resources to those facing significant challenges.

Time

Time constraints emerge as a recurring challenge for teachers, particularly when navigating the diverse needs of G&T children within the confines of short class periods. Aspal underscored the personal sacrifices teachers make to support G&T students, even giving up their own break time to provide individualised guidance:

> *While guiding or advising gifted students does require teachers to give up some of their own break time, it aligns with the idea of going the extra mile to make a difference for these students. It means using personal time to ensure that these students receive the support they need and are not at a disadvantage.* (Aspal)

Like Aspal, Ava acknowledged the pervasive nature of time constraints:

> *Time constraint is a common issue for many educators. To address this, I prioritise and manage my time efficiently. While it is challenging, I try to allocate extra time for G&T students, ensuring they receive the individualised support and guidance they need to thrive.* (Ava)

In contrast to Aspal and Ava, Adam presented a different perspective on time constraints. He does not view them as a significant barrier for supporting G&T students. Instead, he emphasised the value of extracurricular activities as alternative avenues alleviating pressure on teachers' schedules during class time:

> *Finding the time within the school day to try and give one-to-one attention can be really difficult. So, creating those extra groups was another thing that I found really helped. We had the school choir, a school band, and a school drumming club, and all of these things were ways in for these children to continue to develop. I think those extracurricular activities were really important or at least giving a space to those children without necessarily having to point them out.* (Adam)

The contrasting perspectives from Aspal, Ava, and Adam showcase the multifaceted nature of time constraints in gifted education. While Aspal and Ava emphasised the challenges of managing time within limited lesson durations and the need for strategic time management, Adam introduced an alternative approach by leveraging extracurricular activities to provide support to G&T students and alleviate time constraints in the classroom.

Teacher Education

In this case, two of the three teachers, Aspal and Ava, highlighted the shortcomings in both ITE programmes and professional development opportunities regarding G&T children, while the third, Adam, emphasised the importance of personal initiative and did not see it as a challenge. In this regard, while Aspal emphasised a critical gap in ITE, Ava drew attention to the limitations of existing professional development opportunities:

> *I think, in terms of the teaching qualifications people receive, there is not much focus on addressing the needs of gifted and talented students or those with different abilities. The emphasis is often on delivering the basic curriculum to all students rather than being able to cater to the diverse abilities of students. So, one of the most significant problems is the lack of emphasis on teacher education regarding this aspect.* (Aspal)

> *I did not receive any formal training on how to teach gifted and talented students as part of our teacher education programme. If a school has identified such students, the school administration might consider providing additional training to teachers in this regard. The training or certification could cover various aspects, including classroom management skills, pedagogy, subject-specific expertise, and utilising technology.* (Ava)

On the other hand, Adam believes that his past education has not significantly influenced his classroom practices regarding G&T children, emphasising the importance of personal expertise and continuous learning in nurturing the strengths of G&T children:

> *I do not believe that my past training like course works, professional development courses has influenced my classroom practices regarding gifted students…In order to teach gifted students in a state primary school, a practitioner should possess their own expertise in the specific area associated with the child's strengths. Additionally, it is crucial to stay updated and continuously seek out information that can contribute to personal growth and development. This proactive approach enables the practitioner to*

> *focus on nurturing and enhancing the strengths of the talented child in their specific area of excellence.* (Adam)

While all three teachers acknowledged the importance of teacher education in gifted education, their views expose gaps in the current system. While Aspal and Ava emphasised shortcomings in both ITE programme and professional development opportunities, Adam stressed the value of personal initiative and self-directed learning for teachers.

6.3.5 Calypso Primary School

Policy oriented general challenge in Gifted Education

In this case, the teacher highlighted the benefits of mixed ability classrooms. For example, Alex highlighted the motivational benefits for both teachers and other students:

> *It adds an extra layer of motivation for both me as an educator and for the other students. Having high-achieving students in the class serves as an inspiration for their peers, showcasing what is possible and encouraging a positive learning environment.* (Alex)

David stressed the benefit for other students, stating:

> *Teaching more able children with mixed abilities good for the child to aspire to be more able, see how more able reason and answer questions. So, I think it is a positive. I believe that this inclusive approach good but at least we should provide a special provision for them.* (David)

Sarah introduced her perspective by stating:

> *Teaching high-achieving children with mixed abilities in a state primary school is an exciting experience for me, especially as someone with a strong background in mathematics. It challenges me to go beyond teaching basic concepts and allows me to take these high achievers further in their learning journey*. (Sarah)

While teachers like Alex and David highlighted the benefits of mixed ability classrooms for both educators and students, including G&T children, they also acknowledged the complexities involved. For example, John and Emily both highlighted the challenge of balancing the needs of G&T children with those at different levels within mixed ability classrooms:

> *I believe mixed ability classrooms foster collaboration and peer learning, which are essential skills for all students. However, ensuring that G&T students are appropriately challenged while also supporting other students' learning can be a delicate balance.* (John)

> *Balancing the requirements of high-ability students with those at different levels and ensuring each student receives appropriate attention poses a significant challenge.* (Emily)

Additionally, Alex identified maintaining engagement as a primary challenge in educating G&T children in mixed ability classroom:

> *I think one of the primary challenges in educating for high achiever students in my classroom is maintaining engagement. Finding the right level of challenge is crucial because if the material is too easy or too difficult, it can lead to disengagement*. (Alex)

These findings suggest that approaching gifted education with an inclusive manner offers advantages such as peer motivation, professional development, and enriched learning for G&T students. However, teachers also acknowledged challenges in balancing the needs of all students and maintaining engagement across different ability levels.

Undermined support for G&T Children

While the previous theme explored the potential benefits and complexities of mixed ability classrooms for G&T learners, a different challenge emerges when examining the broader educational framework. Here, the focus shifts to the potential shortcomings of existing policies and practices that may inadvertently undermine the needs of G&T students. Teacher like Alex highlighted the difficulties associated with a one-size-fits-all approach to policy:

> *It is challenging to pinpoint specific policies that might work seamlessly with high-achiever students. Each school might interpret and implement policies differently, impacting the inclusivity and opportunities available for high achievers. While some policies may positively contribute to creating an inclusive environment, the majority unintentionally overlook the unique needs of high achievers.* (Alex)

Alex argued that even policies intended to promote inclusion can have unintended consequences. The lack of clear guidelines and consistent implementation across schools can result in a situation where the specific needs of G&T children are not adequately addressed. This sentiment is echoed by Emily, who emphasised the challenges of balancing the needs of diverse learners in a classroom setting:

> *Teaching high-ability or greater depth children alongside those with mixed abilities in a state primary school presents its challenges. It can be particularly demanding when focusing on the middle-ability students, as it is easy to inadvertently overlook the high-ability children*. (Emily)

David pointed out a common issue where G&T children are not sufficiently challenged in school due to the lack of effective policies and leadership oversight. He emphasised the responsibility of school leaders to ensure that G&T children are adequately supported and challenged academically:

> *I think, generally speaking, more able children do not get stretched enough in school subjects unless it is a very, very good school with strong structures and processes in place. Otherwise, it is very likely that because they are more able and because the school is aware that they will just cruise through without causing any issues, they are left unchallenged. So, it is partly due to the lack of policy and also the responsibility falls on the leaders.* (David)

Sarah said:

> *There is a strong emphasis on meeting the needs of all children, with a focus on inclusivity to ensure that the educational needs of every student, including those with varying abilities, special needs, and high-achieving students, are comprehensively addressed. However, in practice, I do not believe there is enough provision specifically tailored to high achievers. The attention seems to be more directed towards other student groups*. (Sarah)

She emphasised the potential shortcomings within the system. While schools may strive to meet the needs of all students, the reality suggests that resources and attention may be disproportionately allocated towards supporting struggling students, leaving G&T children without the specific support and opportunities they need to thrive. John highlighted the disconnect between policy and practice:

> *Currently, government policy emphasizes the lowest 20% as the primary focus group, aligning with the broader educational system. In practice, regulatory bodies like Ofsted, which assess and regulate schools, show little interest in gifted and talented education. During my last inspection, there was minimal attention to this aspect, with a strong emphasis on the lowest 20%. The lack of a clear policy or targeted approach for gifted and talented students is a pressing issue that needs attention.* (John)

Together, these teachers provide a compelling insight into the systemic challenges encountered by G&T children within the current educational system. Inconsistent policy implementation, the struggle to balance diverse needs, a lack of leadership focus, a disproportionate emphasis on other student groups, and a disconnect between policy and accountability all contribute to a situation where the potential of G&T children is often overlooked.

Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education

While the teachers involved in this case study did not explicitly point to a specific policy hindering gifted education, John, the headteacher, identified a critical issue with gifted education policy: a lack of coherence.

> *When considering national, Local Authority (LA), and school policies related to gifted and talented education, it feels like trying to assemble a jigsaw puzzle with pieces that do not quite fit together. There are scattered bits of information, but they do not form a cohesive whole. While there might be a visual table, akin to an English approach to education, there is a lack of clear and cohesive policy, which complicates the implementation of practices for gifted and talented students in the classroom.* (John)

His analogy of a jigsaw puzzle with mismatched pieces aptly describes the current state of gifted education policy, highlighting the challenges posed by the lack of coherence and clarity in policies related to gifted education at the national, local authority, and school levels.

Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities

Parental involvement

This case study reveals a multifaceted picture of parental involvement in gifted education, where even teachers within the same school exhibit differing perspectives. While Millie and John seemingly do not perceive it as a problem, the experiences of Alex, David, and Sarah showcase a range of challenges faced by teachers. For example, Alex said:

> *Communicating with parents presents another challenge. Some parents may express concerns that the work is too difficult for their child. However, it is essential to convey the importance of providing challenges to help students reach their full potential. Ensuring that parents understand the rationale behind the curriculum and the thought process in challenging students is crucial for successful collaboration.* (Alex)

Alex highlighted the difficulty of communicating with parents who may express concerns about challenging their children's abilities. David and Sarah's observations pointed to another challenge: the lack of knowledge some parents have in supporting G&T children:

> *Many parents may not know how to effectively support their more able child beyond encouraging them to take harder tests or pursue advanced educational paths like the 11-plus for grammar schools.* (David)

> *While some children may possess natural gifts and talents, their potential might not be fully realised if they lack the extra support at home. I have observed cases where children with inherent abilities may not reach their peak because of a lack of additional assistance.* (Sarah)

This case demonstrates that parental involvement in gifted education is not a monolithic issue. While some teachers may not experience it as a direct challenge, communication hurdles, lack of knowledge, and limited support at home present difficulties for others. These findings underscore the need for a nuanced approach, with strategies that promote clear communication, provide resources to parents, and foster a collaborative environment that can help all G&T students thrive.

Resources

The insights provided by Alex, Emily, David, Sarah, and John, who all work within the same school, shed light on the diverse experiences regarding the availability and utilisation of resources for G&T children. Alex acknowledged the difficulty in finding resources perfectly suited to the needs of G&T children, often resorting to adapting existing materials. He contrasts this with the availability of resources for lower-achieving students, suggesting a disparity in resource accessibility based on students' academic levels:

> *I would not say finding resources like books, materials suitable for high achievers is a large problem, but it can be challenging and difficult sometimes to find resources for high-achiever students. I often find myself creating my own versions by adapting existing materials. There's rarely a ready-made document or worksheet that perfectly fits their needs. While it can be harder to find specific resources for high achievers, it is more manageable for the less able or the bottom 20%, where resources are more readily available and adaptable*. (Alex)

Emily, on the other hand, generally found ready-made resources suitable for G&T children, occasionally supplementing with custom materials. Her experience highlighted the availability of resources tailored to the needs of G&T children:

> *I usually find ready-made resources that are suitable for high-ability or greater depth children. Occasionally, I might create my own materials if I feel there is a need for something more tailored to their specific needs. However, most of the time, pre-made resources are readily available and suitable.* (Emily)

David expressed confidence in his ability to locate suitable materials, attributing it to his extensive teaching experience. His perspective underscores the importance of teacher expertise in navigating resource challenges:

> *I do not encounter any issues when it comes to finding resources. With many years of teaching experience, I have developed the expertise to locate suitable materials and activities for more able children. It is not a challenge for an experienced teacher.* (David)

Sarah identified a specific challenge in consistently finding materials to challenge G&T children, often resorting to creating custom tasks. This highlights the ongoing need for teachers to adapt resources to meet the needs of G&T children:

> *Educating high achiever children in my classroom poses certain challenges, particularly in terms of resources. Finding suitable materials to consistently challenge them sometimes requires me to create custom tasks.* (Sarah)

John emphasised the challenge of effectively integrating available resources for G&T students, suggesting that while resources exist, their utilisation presents a complex task:

> *While suitable resources for G&T students are readily available, the challenge lies in effectively combining and integrating these resources.* (John)

Despite working within the same school, educators like Alex, Emily, David, Sarah, and John presented a spectrum of experiences regarding resources for G&T children. While some like Emily found readily available resources, others like Alex and Sarah struggled to find perfect fits, resorting to adaptations or custom tasks. This highlights the need for a wider variety of G&T resources alongside professional development for teachers to not only access but also integrate and adapt these resources for optimal learning outcomes.

Time

In analysing the perspectives provided by Emily, David, Sarah, and John regarding time constraints in gifted education, it becomes evident that managing time effectively presents a significant challenge for teachers in this case. While the specific manifestations may vary, teachers unanimously struggle to effectively manage their time to cater to the needs of G&T children. Emily acknowledged that while she often finds ready-made resources suitable for G&T children, the ongoing challenge lies in the time constraints that hinder the creation of custom materials tailored to their specific needs:

> *I usually find ready-made resources that are suitable for greater depth children. Occasionally, I might create my own materials if I feel there is a need for something more tailored to their specific needs. Time constraints can be a significant challenge, making it difficult to always create custom materials, and it remains an ongoing issue.* (Emily)

Sarah underscores the ongoing challenge of planning and adaptation, noting that while she has accumulated resources over the years, maintaining their relevance and effectiveness requires continuous review and adjustment, which consumes significant time and effort:

> *The need for ongoing planning and adaptation is a challenge. While I have accumulated resources over the years, ensuring their relevance and effectiveness requires periodic review and adjustment. Maintaining a bank of resources is helpful, but it takes considerable time and effort to create these materials.* (Sarah)

While David proposes a stimulating approach by allowing G&T students to engage with secondary-level work within the primary setting, he acknowledges the significant time constraints this creates for teachers:

> *I envision organising this educational process by allowing these more able children to engage with secondary school-level work within the primary setting. Of course, implementing this approach may demand more preparation time and effort from teachers.* (David)

John connected time constraints to the challenge of differentiation:

> *Ensuring consistency and coherence in providing the right level of challenge for each student can be quite difficult, given the varied needs in the classroom. Time constraints on teachers' workloads also pose a challenge in achieving this balance.* (John)

In this case, four out of the five teachers, namely Emily, Sarah, David, and John, identify time constraints as a significant challenge in catering to G&T children. Emily highlighted the difficulty of consistently creating custom materials due to time constraints, despite often finding ready-made resources suitable for G&T students. Sarah echoed this sentiment, emphasising the ongoing effort required to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of accumulated resources, which consumes considerable time and effort. David recognised that implementing a stimulating approach, such as allowing G&T students to engage with secondary-level work, demands additional preparation time and effort from teachers. John connects time constraints directly to the challenge of maintaining consistency and coherence in providing differentiated instruction to meet the varied needs of students. Despite their dedication and efforts, the ongoing struggle with time constraints highlights the need for systemic support and strategies to alleviate this challenge, ensuring that G&T children receive the tailored education they deserve.

In this case, the perspectives of Sarah and Emily provided valuable insights into the realm of teacher education, regarding gifted education. Both teachers offered reflections on ITE experiences and how these have shaped their approaches to teaching G&T children:

> *In my PGCE training, we extensively discussed both children with special educational needs (SEND) and those requiring additional challenges, particularly high able children. Our training included strategies for adapting coursework to meet the needs of this group. This training has significantly influenced my classroom practices today*. (Emily)

> *PGCE programme I attended has significantly influenced my classroom practices with high-achieving children. This training provided me with valuable ideas on how to effectively challenge these students, including the types of questions to use for meaningful engagement*. (Sarah)

On the other hand, David's experience showed a need for specialised G&T education and strategies for workload management:

> *My experience and proficiency have played a crucial role in shaping my classroom practices for more able children… However, I would like to see teacher training courses cover areas such as clear strategies for organising and managing workload, meeting planning deadlines, and staying on top of responsibilities. Additionally, specialised training or coursework related to more able children, perhaps in the form of a specialist in a subject like maths, would be beneficial.* (David)

John said:

> *Continuous professional development is crucial in staying current with effective practices, especially when it comes to addressing the needs of gifted and talented students. Adapting to these changes is an ongoing, intuitive process in my teaching journey...I would like training that delves into the mechanics of long-term memory, children's cognitive skills, and how memory and workload function. This deeper understanding of how learners learn would enable me to teach them more effectively.* (John)

John's experience revealed an insufficiency in G&T-related content within his ITE programme. He also emphasised the critical necessity of incorporating recent neuroscientific research, particularly concerning long-term memory, cognitive skills, and the mechanics of memory, into teacher education programmes. This assertion is supported by current literature, which suggests

that exploring the neural underpinnings of 'giftedness and talent' can provide educators with a more comprehensive understanding of how G&T students learn and excel academically (Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation, 2023).

The analysis depicts two contrasting situations in the ITE programme for gifted education. On one hand, Emily and Sarah's experiences highlighted successful integration of gifted education content, demonstrating effective preparation for addressing the needs of G&T children. On the other hand, perspectives from individuals like Alex and John underscored a gap in teacher education, where there is a lack of emphasis on gifted education, leaving educators without adequate strategies to effectively engage and challenge G&T children.

6.3.6 Discussion

This section explored the challenges encountered by teachers when educating G&T children within an inclusive school. Two main categories of challenges are identified: policy oriented general challenges and teacher-specific challenges and opportunities.

Policy oriented general challenges underscore the tension between inclusive education policies' rhetoric and the practical difficulties in effectively meeting the needs of all students, especially G&T children. Teachers across all cases recognised the value of diversity, peer learning, and avoiding classroom segregation. They viewed inclusive education as enriching the learning experience and fostering a sense of community among students with different abilities.

Despite supporting inclusive education, teachers across all cases also acknowledged the challenges it poses in meeting the diverse needs of all students, particularly G&T children. The primary challenge identified is the difficulty in balancing the needs of G&T children with those at different levels within mixed ability classrooms. This challenge includes maintaining engagement, providing appropriate levels of challenge, and ensuring no student is left behind. These challenges are inherent within the inclusive education framework and are experienced across all cases. However, among the four cases, Case M stands out due to teachers' shared

reservations regarding the practicality of achieving genuine inclusivity within mixed ability classrooms. A teacher also mentioned the high number of students in her class, indicating that this might be a reason why she feels unable to provide enough attention to G&T children. Teachers' negative approach towards inclusion stems from the lack of resources at the school and class levels (Lindner *et al*., 2023). When considering its unique context (See 'Cases selection'), the lack of resources at both the school and class levels might be attributed to teachers' negative attitudes towards inclusion.

Moreover, across all cases, there is a consistent emphasis on the disjunction between policy objectives and the practical dynamics within classrooms. Despite the rhetoric of inclusive education policies, teachers observed that G&T children may receive less attention or support in practice due to various factors, including unclear policies, inconsistent implementation, and a disproportionate focus on struggling students at the expense of G&T children. This can be considered as an example of this disparity, further highlighting the challenges faced by G&T children in receiving adequate attention and support within inclusive education frameworks.

What I mentioned above were the general and practical challenges discussed by teachers within the framework of inclusive education. The focus shifted to specific policies that hinder gifted education within mainstream schools while navigating the complexities of inclusive education. Across all cases, the variety of policy challenges teachers highlighted underscores the intricate relationship between policy frameworks and effective support for G&T students. For instance, the discussion in Case L emphasised the influence of league tables on school priorities, potentially neglecting the needs of G&T children due to a narrow focus on standardised test scores. Similarly, in Case M, concerns were raised about strict curriculum policies prioritising core subjects, limiting opportunities for G&T children to explore their diverse talents. Case A highlighted policies in England, such as restrictions on failing or repeating a year and pressure from external evaluations, which may hinder the ability to adequately challenge and support G&T students. Lastly, in the Calypso Primary School, the lack of coherence in gifted education policies across national, local authority, and school levels was pointed out, complicating meeting needs of G&T children. These insights collectively highlight the challenges educators face in navigating policy frameworks that may not fully align with the needs of G&T children.

Another conclusion to be drawn is that while there is no clear policy targeting G&T children, and their education is left to local schools, the abundance of policies without clear directives

may lead schools to implement policies without considering their potential positive or negative effects on G&T children.

When considering the teacher-specific challenges and opportunities in educating G&T children, a nuanced landscape emerges across the cases, shaped by factors including parental involvement, resource availability, time constraints, and teacher education.

To start with parental involvement, while none of the teachers in Case L viewed parental involvement as a challenge, teachers in other cases, though not all, perceived parental involvement as a challenge. This suggests that parents' socioeconomic background might have contributed to their proactive engagement in their children's schooling. This finding aligns with research suggesting a link between socioeconomic background and parental involvement in gifted education: limited resources and educational experience can hinder parents' ability to advocate for their children's needs or provide the specific support they require (Mun *et al*., 2021).

While parental involvement plays a crucial role in education, teachers often encounter a significant challenge in ensuring adequate resources for G&T children. This challenge becomes evident across all cases, such as Case A, where teachers struggled to find suitable materials, indicating a deficiency of G&T-specific resources in certain educational settings. In contrast, teachers in Case L demonstrated resourcefulness by utilising digital platforms and collaborative networks, showcasing the potential for educators to find solutions despite the lack of resources specifically tailored for G&T children in their schools. This challenge is consistent with findings from research, which highlights the lack of resources specifically tailored for G&T children as one of the most significant obstacles faced by teachers in mixed ability classrooms (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021).

Having appropriate resources for G&T children is only the first step. Once teacher have identified appropriate resources, they may need to dedicate additional time to help students effectively use them (VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh, 2005). The lack of time is also a challenge that teachers face in effectively implementing differentiation (Smets, 2017; Roiha and Polso, 2021). This lack of time to differentiate lesson for G&T children consistently emerged as a challenge across all cases. Several strategies can address this challenge. In Case M, teachers prioritised and managed their time effectively, accommodating G&T children

within the existing schedule. The strategy highlighted in Case M demonstrates how effective time management within the classroom can serve as another instance of overcoming this challenge. Conversely, Case A highlighted the use of extracurricular activities to provide additional exploration opportunities. An example of this emerges as it serves as a potent approach to meet the varied needs of G&T children while also alleviating time constraints for teachers.

The final challenge that teachers encounter is the lack of focus in teacher education related to G&T children. As previously mentioned in the 'Teacher education in Gifted Education in England' section, the regulations governing teacher education, including in-service education, do not specify particular requirements for the education of G&T children. However, there are non-ministerial organisations that provide support in this area, despite the absence of mandatory regulations (Mönks and Pflüger, 2005; DfE, 2019). In this context, teachers across all cases highlight gaps in ITE programmes and professional development opportunities related to gifted education. While only a few teachers in this research reported receiving education in ITE programme specifically related to gifted education, many expressed a lack of education in dealing with these children. However, teachers mentioned the positive impact of the differentiation-based education they received in ITE programmes on effectively addressing the needs of these children. This situation extends to the professional development opportunities available within their schools: none of the teachers stated that they had attended any professional development opportunities specifically tailored to gifted education in their own schools. However, some mentioned the positive influence of the support system already in place at their schools, which focuses on increasing subject knowledge of teachers.

Another point worth noting is that, as previously mentioned, the schools included in this research had generally positive evaluations regarding the availability of professional development opportunities in their Ofsted inspection reports. However, these evaluations were not specifically related to gifted education-based education but rather encompassed a broader assessment. When considering the issue raised by all cases, where teachers stated that they did not attend any education in their schools aimed at increasing their knowledge related to G&T children, it can be said that the positive evaluation of teacher education in Ofsted inspection reports may not provide a clue as to whether education specifically focused on gifted education is being provided.

Concluding this section of analysis, it is evident that across the cases, differences and similarities emerged under each theme. Among the subthemes and themes discussed, three main differences were identified. Firstly, in Case L, parental involvement was not perceived as a challenge. Secondly, within the theme of 'Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education,' each case showcased a distinct policy hindering provision for G&T children. Lastly, in Case M, teachers expressed reservations regarding the practicality of achieving genuine inclusivity within mixed ability classrooms.

6.4 Teachers' provision for G&T children

6.4.1 Introduction

This section explores the identification procedures and provision strategies employed to cater to the needs of G&T children. It examines how schools navigate the identification process and subsequently provide appropriate educational provisions for G&T children. The exploration unfolds through two primary lenses related to 'identification': 'School-wide identification' and 'Teacher-specific identification'. 'School-wide identification' scrutinises the overarching procedures and systems in place for identifying G&T children within the school context. Conversely, 'Teacher-specific identification' investigates the unique methods and approaches employed by individual teachers to identify G&T children within their classrooms.

Following the identification process, the section shifts its focus to the provision strategies employed to meet the diverse needs of G&T students. The analysis highlights the significance of adopting student-centred approaches in provisioning, emphasising differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration as key strategies. These strategies aim to tailor education to individual students' strengths and needs, fostering inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive.

Moreover, the section explores the 'Peer learning', shedding light on how teachers implement collaborative learning experiences for G&T students through various grouping practices. This analysis provides insights into the diverse philosophies and approaches adopted by teachers in shaping the provision landscape. The identified themes are as follows:

- Identification
    - School-wide identification
    - Teacher-specific identification
- Student-centred approach to provision
    - Differentiation for all
    - Enrichment
    - Acceleration
- Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions
    - Peer learning

6.4.2. Case L

Identification

In the schools involved in this research, there was not a designated provision solely dedicated to G&T children. Identification in these schools was aimed at providing a foundational differentiation provision and directing students towards enrichment activities based on their abilities. This theme explores the strategies employed by teachers and the school's own system to comprehend the identification procedures implemented in schools. From this exploration, two subthemes have emerged: 'School-wide identification' and 'Teacher-specific identification'.

School-wide identification

When asked about the G&T identification process followed by the school, the teachers provided diverse perspectives: Lily emphasised her school's approach, focusing on academic criteria. She said:

> *At our school, we identify high prior attainer students through a combination of methods. Academic progress is evaluated throughout the year, considering whether students are meeting, exceeding, or falling below age-related expectations. We conducted standardised assessments in reading, grammar, and mathematics. Additionally, we had our own school system for assessing writing. These assessments allowed us to determine where children were performing in relation to age-related expectations.* (Lily)

In contrast, Liam highlighted that there is no identification system in place at his school:

> *My current school does not have a well-established process for identifying gifted students.* (Liam)

Luke provided insight into a more comprehensive approach at his school, involving teacher and parent nominations, expert evaluations, external support, and talent development programmes. He stated:

> *The identification process starts with either classroom teacher nomination or parental nomination when we suspect that a student might be gifted. When we identify such students, we refer them to experts for further assessment. We collaborate with experts in the field to ensure accurate identification. Additionally, we may receive support from external organisations or local authorities to help identify students with exceptional abilities. In some cases, we guide these students towards specialised camps or programmes that are designed to nurture their talents in different ways. So, the process begins with classroom teacher or parental nomination, and from there, we take steps to ensure these students receive the tailored education they deserve.* (Luke)

These examples illustrate the diverse approaches utilised by schools in identifying G&T children, ranging from prioritising standardised testing to employing more holistic assessments and expert consultation.

Teacher-specific identification

The previous section explored the 'School-wide identification' subtheme in Case L, highlighting the diverse approaches schools take. This section explores the teacher-specific identification methods, examining how individual teachers identified G&T children within these frameworks. In this regard, Liam mentioned that there was no specific identification system in place at his school, but he outlined his own method. He stated:

> *I assess their progress and learning levels in the subjects we cover using standardised tests related to the topics we have studied in class. Besides that, I do not use any other methods.* (Liam)

This reliance solely on standardised tests has limitations, potentially overlooking students who excel outside the tested areas or struggle with standardised test formats.

Lily had previously mentioned employing various methods to identify children at her school and later clarified that this identification process includes teacher nominations and non-academic areas. She said:

> *Teacher assessments play a significant role in the academic aspect of identification. Teachers observe and assess students' performance and progress in various subjects to identify those who excel beyond their peers. If a student excels in a particular area outside of academics, this is also noted by the teacher.* (Lily)

This approach incorporates teacher observations alongside assessments, allowing for identification beyond just academic performance. It acknowledges the possibility of students excelling in non-academic areas. Luke previously mentioned a well-structured system at his school that begins with teacher and parent nominations and involves collaboration with experts in the field. He described his approach in this process as follows:

> *It is more about observation, citing, and recording students' progress instead of relying solely on statistical measurements. While all assessments are important, I find that formative assessment is particularly effective. Formative assessment not only helps the teacher understand how well the student is performing but also provides insights into their strengths and weaknesses.* (Luke)

Luke highlighted the importance of ongoing observation and formative assessment in identifying G&T children. However, his approach seems to be focused solely on academic areas.

Overall, Liam's sole reliance on standardised tests highlights a common pitfall, as it may overlook G&T children who excel outside tested areas or struggle with standardised test formats. In contrast, Lily and Luke exemplify the significance of teacher expertise, which extends beyond mere test scores.

Student-centred approach to provision

This theme explores the emphasis on student-centred approaches in providing for G&T students. It highlights the core principle of acknowledging the unique strengths and needs of each child. The focus shifts from a one-size-fits-all model to educational approaches that are tailored to individual G&T children. Three key subthemes emerge from this exploration: 'Differentiation for all', 'Enrichment,' and 'Acceleration.'

Differentiation for all

This subtheme underscores differentiation as a fundamental pedagogical approach in educating all students, not solely focusing on G&T children. It emphasises the necessity of tailoring teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of every student, ensuring inclusive educational practices. In this regards, Lily's perspective draws attention to the notion that differentiation highlights the importance of creating an inclusive learning environment where all students could succeed:

> *My perspective on education is centred around providing equal access and opportunities to every student. I believe that education should be inclusive and that every student deserves the chance to excel. Thus, I believe differentiation should revolve around providing access to resources and setting appropriate expectations.* (Lily)

Similarly, Liam articulates a similar sentiment, emphasising how differentiation supports the development of all students:

> *My preferred practices involve differentiation and ongoing communication with the students. This ensures that their education is both challenging and tailored to their unique needs, this applies not only to gifted students but also to non-gifted ones.* (Liam)

Luke also recognises the importance of differentiation, particularly in the education of gifted students:

> *I believe that differentiation plays a crucial role in the education of gifted students in a state primary school. It involves offering them activities and tasks that are more aligned with their abilities and interests, rather than providing the same activities given to other students. When these students find the tasks too easy or not challenging enough, they can become disengaged or bored. Therefore, it is essential to provide them with specific tasks tailored to their needs.* (Luke)

The teacher perspectives presented here showcase a unified emphasis on differentiation as a key pedagogical strategy. Lily emphasises the creation of an inclusive environment where all students have access to resources and are challenged appropriately. Liam reinforces this concept, stressing that differentiation applies to all students, not just G&T learners, and highlights the importance of ongoing communication to understand individual needs. While Luke specifically mentions differentiation for G&T children, it is likely his approach extends to all learners.

Enrichment

The teachers participating in this research highlighted enrichment as another method they employ to address the educational needs of G&T children. The focus lies on fostering

excellence in areas where students show strength, encompassing both academic and non-academic realms. Liam emphasised the value of enrichment in enhancing the educational experience. He identified out-of-school programmes, school clubs, and activities as potential avenues for G&T children. However, Liam highlighted a potential limitation where these clubs may not always cater directly to gifted individuals' needs, sometimes targeting more advanced-level students instead:

> *Enrichment about enhancing the quality and value of education. I see enrichment opportunities for gifted students in the form of out-of-school provisions or various school clubs and activities. However, these clubs might not always serve gifted individuals as their primary focus. Some are tailored more toward advanced-level students. So, enrichment can sometimes be beneficial but may not fully address the unique needs of gifted students.* (Liam)

Lily described a shift towards inclusive enrichment practices within her school. She highlighted the importance of nurturing talents in all students, and these clubs serve as a valuable platform for such development:

> *In the past, we used to organise various clubs specifically for high prior attainers, which were invitation-only. Initially, these clubs were limited to certain students, but over time, other children expressed interest in joining as well. The primary aim of these clubs was to cultivate critical thinking skills and nurture deeper interests among students. Now, these clubs are open to all students, covering not only academic areas such as science but also non-academic areas like music and dance. Students have the freedom to choose which clubs to join based on their interests. I strongly believe that it is crucial for students to develop their talents in their respective areas, and these clubs play a significant role in facilitating that development.* (Lily)

Like Lily and Liam, Luke emphasised the importance of enrichment for G&T children, advocating for tailored extracurricular activities and camps specifically designed to nurture their talents:

> *I believe that students identified as gifted at the primary level should have access to extracurricular activities and camps specifically designed for their talents. These camps bring together talented students and provide tailored activities to help them enhance their skills.* (Luke)

Additionally, despite the presence of various extracurricular activities listed on the school's website and the positive evaluation received from Ofsted in this regard, Luke's statement may indicate a discrepancy between what is publicly advertised and his personal experience within the school:

> *I can mention in-class activities that often revolve around enriching and accelerating the curriculum to match their developmental level and pace. These activities aim to provide tailored content that aligns with their abilities. However, within the school itself, there were not any additional specific provisions that I was aware of.* (Luke)

Luke, as a teacher, might primarily focus on in-class provision and may not be fully aware of broader enrichment programmes managed by other school professionals such as counsellors and specialists. This explanation aligns with the case study's earlier mention of the school's focus on formative assessment within the classroom, separate from a more comprehensive school-wide assessment process involving various professionals. Also, there might be a communication gap within the school regarding enrichment programmes. Information about programmes managed by other professionals might not be effectively disseminated to all teachers, potentially hindering a cohesive enrichment approach.

Together, teachers' perspectives underscore the importance of enrichment in addressing the diverse needs of G&T children while also emphasising the need for inclusive practices and effective communication within the school community to ensure that all students have access to appropriate enrichment opportunities.

Acceleration

While differentiation and enrichment are widely embraced practices for G&T children for the schools across all cases, the use of acceleration presents a more nuanced picture. Participants acknowledged both the potential benefits and drawbacks associated with accelerating G&T children' learning. Liam's perspective on acceleration highlights a key concern: its potential negative impact on social and emotional development:

> *Acceleration is another aspect. Acceleration involves moving students to a higher grade or level to match their advanced capabilities. While it has its advantages, I do not think it is always beneficial. Accelerating gifted students, like placing a Year 6 student into a Year 7 or Year 8 class, can create issues due to differences in maturity. Younger students in an older group may face challenges related to maturity levels and social interactions. Additionally, they may find it challenging to fit in. As they advance through school and*

> *graduate earlier, they might face problems when it comes to college or university admission, as they may not meet the age requirements. So, acceleration can sometimes lead to social and developmental challenges.* (Liam)

Liam's perspective underscored the complexity surrounding acceleration as a strategy for G&T children. While it may offer academic advantages, such as providing more challenging coursework, it also raises concerns about social and developmental impacts. It's important to note that Liam's perspective primarily focuses on grade skipping, which may not be the most suitable acceleration method for all G&T students.

Lily's insights added another dimension to the discussion of acceleration, particularly grade skipping. She highlighted that government policies have not aligned with its widespread implementation, and acceleration in the form of grade skipping is not a common practice:

> *While the concept of acceleration, such as having children skip a grade, has not been in alignment with government policies, it is worth considering, especially for exceptionally gifted students. While there may be concerns about missing out on certain social aspects, if a student is academically ready for advanced work, it is a conversation worth having.* (Lily)

Another teacher, Luke, did not mention acceleration practices at all. When considering all perspectives together, especially with Luke not mentioning acceleration practices at all, it can be inferred that none of the forms of acceleration, such as early entry, subject-based acceleration, or grade skipping, are popular practices in these schools.

Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions

While the 'Student-centred approach to provision' explores strategies tailored to the specific needs and individualities of students, often driven by regulatory frameworks or school policies, the 'Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions' theme shifts the focus to how participants, guided by their unique preferences and philosophies, shape the provision landscape. Here, 'Peer learning' emerged as a common practice among participating teachers, but its implementation

and effectiveness varied significantly, reflecting the diverse teaching philosophies and approaches of teachers.

Peer learning

Peer learning, an integral element of inclusive education, involves students working together to achieve shared learning goals. Grouping practices, a crucial aspect of peer learning, play a pivotal role in shaping the dynamics and effectiveness of these collaborative interactions (Archambault, 1993). In this research, teachers employed different approaches to engage children in independent and collaborative project-based learning experiences. Notably, two distinct approaches to grouping emerged among the participating educators: ability grouping and potentially heterogeneous grouping. In this context, ability grouping refers to the practice of grouping students based on similar academic achievement or prior knowledge of a subject. For instance, Liam stated that he chose both mixed ability and ability grouping and justified his utilisation of these approaches by highlighting the social, emotional, and intellectual needs of G&T children:

> *The need for socialisation is crucial for gifted students. While they may excel academically, they often face challenges in social interactions. Their peers may not share the same level of maturity, which can lead to feelings of isolation or being out of sync with their classmates. Also, gifted students benefit greatly from opportunities to interact with like-minded peers who can understand and engage with them at a similar level of intellectual depth.* (Liam)

On the other hand, Lily advocated exclusively for heterogeneous grouping, where students of varying abilities collaborate. She expressed reservations about ability grouping, preferring mixed ability groups to create a more dynamic classroom environment:

> *Some high prior attainer students, despite their abilities, may struggle with group work, and in such cases, the need is to help them develop effective collaboration skills. Encouraging them to work in groups is essential, even if their peers may not think in the same way or at the same speed…..One practice I avoid is grouping students solely based on their abilities. I prefer mixed ability groups as it creates a more dynamic*

> *classroom environment. While there may be designated seating arrangements at times, I make an effort to keep those groups mixed in terms of ability.* (Lily)

Unlike Lily and Liam, Luke did not consider grouping practices, such as ability grouping or mixed ability grouping, as provisions when educating G&T children.

This analysis reveals a spectrum of teacher philosophies regarding grouping practices for G&T students. Liam prioritised social and intellectual connection through ability grouping and mixed ability grouping, while Lily emphasised developing collaboration skills in mixed ability settings. Luke's silence regarding grouping practices may indicate a tendency towards homogeneous grouping within the context of inclusive education for G&T children.

6.4.3 Case A

Identification

School-wide Identification

This subtheme explores the identification of G&T children in three different schools, revealing a diverse landscape of approaches. Two teachers, Ava and Adam, highlighted the concerning absence of formal systems in their schools. Ava's statement exemplified this lack:

> *We do not currently have an identification process for gifted and talented students in our school. (Ava)*

Similarly, Adam described a reliance on informal methods:

> *As for the current school I work at, there is not a specific system for keeping records of gifted students. We primarily rely on teacher observations to assess the progress of more able and/or talented students. This involves teachers closely observing and monitoring the students' development and performance in various areas. While formal assessment tools may be used in some cases, the emphasis is placed on continuous teacher observation to understand the students' progress more comprehensively.* (Adam)

In contrast, Aspal's school utilised a structured system centred on classroom assessments:

> *In our school, the primary identification process involves administering tests within the classroom, such as end-of-module or end-of-topic assessments, to measure the progress of gifted students. These assessments are conducted upon the completion of a specific module or topic, serving as a means to evaluate the students' comprehension and performance.* (Aspal)

The absence of a formal system in Ava's school raises concerns about the potential for G&T children to be overlooked. Similarly, the reliance solely on teacher observations in Adam's school may lead to inconsistencies in identifying G&T children. While structured assessments in Aspal's school provide a method for identification, the reliance on standardised tests alone might not capture the full spectrum of abilities in G&T children. Altogether, this case sparks questions about the effectiveness of different identification methods and the potential benefits of a more unified approach for recognising G&T children across schools.

Teacher-specific identification

In this case, Aspal explained the method they follow at their school, which revolves around classroom assessments such as end-of-module or end-of-topic tests to measure the progress of G&T children. In this regard, Aspal stated his role in this process as:

> *As mentioned before, assessment tools such as end-of-module tests or end-of-topic tests are used to measure the progress of gifted students. For instance, in mathematics, we have various tests designed for different levels of students. If a student consistently scores 100% on three consecutive tests, they are then moved to the next level where they are challenged with more difficult questions.* (Aspal)

On the other hand, Ava, unlike Aspal, did not have an identification system for these students but described an inclusive approach that encompasses all students, including those who are gifted and talented. Ava stated that the primary goal is not identification but rather a systematic and ongoing way of tracking the students' development.

> *I do not categorise students as gifted or non-gifted. I use the same assessment tools for all students. I prefer a formative approach, which means ongoing assessment throughout the learning process rather than just at the end. These portfolios contain a collection of the students' work and activities, showcasing their progress over time.* (Ava)

Like Ava, Adam's school does not have a formal identification process. Although he mentioned a system based on teacher observation, he did not provide any details regarding this approach.

In summary, the teacher-specific identification methods in this case showcase varied approaches. Aspal employed structured classroom assessments, Ava opted for formative assessments along with student portfolios, and Adam relied on teacher observation without a formal process. This case highlights a potential shift towards a more continuous monitoring approach, encompassing academic areas, rather than a one-time identification process.

Student-centred approach to provision

Differentiation for all

All teachers in this case, Aspal, Ava, and Adam, offered compelling perspectives on a crucial teaching strategy: differentiation. They advocated for differentiation in the classroom, but they approached it from slightly different angles. Aspal focused on providing extension tasks for G&T children to keep them engaged and challenged:

> *One of my preferred practices with students, including those who are gifted, in my classroom is differentiation by providing them with extra challenging questions or activities as extension tasks. This practice is important because these students often finish their regular tasks quickly and may become disengaged or bored if they do not have something more stimulating to work on. By offering extension tasks, I can keep them actively engaged and provide opportunities for them to push themselves further. The extension tasks are designed to be more challenging and complex, allowing these students to explore the topic in greater depth or apply their knowledge in more advanced ways.* (Aspal)

Ava, on the other hand, emphasised a flexible approach to differentiation that accommodates the individual learning needs of all students:

> *Rather than strictly adhering to a uniform curriculum, I embedded a more flexible approach that allows for individualised learning. It is important for teachers to be able to adjust their methods to meet the unique learning needs of each student. This flexibility allows teachers to employ different teaching methods for gifted and talented students as well as those with other special needs.* (Ava)

Adam underscored the essential nature of differentiation in catering to the diverse needs of students, particularly in the face of challenges such as large class sizes and standardised curricula:

> *Differentiation is one of my preferred practices in the classroom. I believe it is crucial because it allows us to cater to the diverse needs of our students. In a system where we often have to manage large class sizes, follow a standard curriculum, and meet various requirements, differentiation is challenging but essential. It ensures that every child can engage with the material in a way that suits their individual learning style, helping them to relate to and develop from the content.* (Adam)

In conclusion, the perspectives of Aspal, Ava, and Adam shed light on the multifaceted nature of differentiation as a crucial teaching strategy. Aspal's focus on providing extension tasks for G&T children underscored the importance of challenging and engaging these learners. Ava's advocacy for curriculum flexibility emphasised the need for personalised approaches to meet the diverse needs of all students, including those with special needs. Adam's recognition of the challenges posed by large class sizes and standardised curricula underscored the vital role of differentiation in ensuring that every student can access and engage with the material in a way that suits their individual learning style. Together, these perspectives highlight the importance of adapting teaching methods to create inclusive and effective learning environments for all students.

Enrichment

In this case, Ava demonstrated a well-rounded approach to enrichment, prioritising student interests and development through a range of strategies. They provided opportunities for exploration, critical thinking, and creativity, both within the classroom and by encouraging participation in relevant extracurricular activities. This student-centred approach caters to individual needs and fosters a love of learning:

> *I offer opportunities for students to explore topics that interest or challenge them. This can involve providing advanced coursework, facilitating discussions, or organising projects that encourage critical thinking and creativity. Additionally, if I identify children with specific interests or abilities, I encourage them to participate in extra-curricular activities available in our school. I encourage them to participate in extracurricular activities relevant to their interests, which are available in our school.* (Aspal)

However, Adam raised concerns about the lack of specific provisions for G&T children in terms of enrichment activities, stating that there are no dedicated provisions beyond what is provided for all students:

> *There are no in-school or out-of-school provisions for gifted students except for the opportunities that should be provided for all students.* (Adam)

Considering that Adam's school (Ashford Primary School) received positive evaluations from Ofsted regarding only subject-based enrichment activities, and there is limited detailed information about extracurricular activities on the school's website, and the absence of an identification system, it could be suggested that the school either prioritises enrichment activities focused on non-academic areas or does not have a clear focus on enrichment activities in general.

The findings from case M show that enrichment practices vary considerably depending on the importance schools place on them. While Aspal demonstrated a comprehensive approach, Adam's perspective highlighted potential areas for improvement at Ashford Primary.

Acceleration

In this case, Aspal discussed acceleration using an example from a previous school where she worked, specifically mentioning grade skipping as a form of acceleration. However, she did not mention implementing such practices in her current school. Aspal focused on the positive aspects of acceleration and did not provide an evaluation of its potential negative effects.

> *I have personal experience working in a school that had a unique structure. Instead of the usual six-year primary school programme, this particular school only had five years. Due to the low number of students, the year four students were split between year five and year three. This division was based on their ability, with more able and gifted students placed in the year five class, while less able students were placed in the year three class. Even within these classes, there was further differentiation based on ability. Some students in year five were not yet at the same level as others, but they were still performing at a higher level compared to their peers in year three. This kind of acceleration allowed students to progress according to their abilities. It is important to note that this structure is specific to that particular school and not the norm. However, in my view, acceleration can be a highly effective provision for gifted students. It allows them to work at a pace that challenges and stimulates them, ensuring they continue to grow and develop their abilities.* (Aspal)

Similarly, Ava, like Aspal, only discussed acceleration within the context of grade skipping but, unlike Aspal, mentioned both the negative and positive aspects:

> *Acceleration may also be suitable in certain cases, where students can move ahead in a subject or topic to match their level of understanding. However, it is important to exercise caution with acceleration, as advancing a student to a higher grade can have social and psychological implications.* (Ava)

On the other hand, Adam, another teacher in this case, did not mention acceleration or provide any guidance on potential provisions implemented or could be implemented for these children in his school.

Overall, the lack of comprehensive discussions or implementations of acceleration methods, including not only grade skipping but also other forms such as early entry and subject-based acceleration, among the teachers indicates that it is not a common practice in these schools. Additionally, it suggests that teachers who have observed or experienced these practices first-hand may have less concern about their potential negative effects.

Peer learning

In Case M, Aspal did not evaluate grouping practices specifically for these children as a provision. In contrast, Ava creates mixed ability groups within the classroom. However, she aimed for a balance by ensuring that the overall class distribution of abilities remains somewhat similar. This might involve creating multiple mixed ability groups with a similar range of abilities across each group:

> *I also use grouping as a strategy. When forming groups, I aim for a balance between heterogeneity within groups and homogeneity across the entire class. This approach allows students to learn from one another, as well as fosters a sense of collaboration and leadership among gifted and talented children. The goal here is not only to help the more advanced students advance further but also to create an environment where students support and learn from each other. It is a blend of academic motivation and social development.* (Ava)

The statement above emphasises that Ava utilised mixed ability grouping in her classroom with a twofold purpose. First, she aimed to foster collaboration and leadership among G&T children. By placing them in groups with students of varying abilities, G&T children had opportunities to explain concepts, offer guidance, and develop leadership skills. Second, she sought to create an environment where all students supported and learned from each other. This mixed ability approach allowed students to benefit from the diverse perspectives within their groups, promoting both academic progress and social development for all.

Ava's strategy aimed to create a blend of academic motivation and social development through mixed ability grouping. Similarly, Adam also favoured this mixed ability grouping strategy and explained how he utilised it for similar purposes in different contexts:

> *If it is the first time I am meeting children in a reception class, I might not know each student's abilities and preferences yet. In such cases, my focus is on stimulating and engaging the collective group rather than pinpointing specific individuals. As I get to know the students, I observe and notice things in the moment and improvise*

> *accordingly. If I identify a child with exceptional skills or strengths, I might spontaneously create opportunities for them to showcase their talents or take on leadership roles within the class.* (Adam)

Ava and Adam's mixed ability grouping demonstrates a well-considered approach to peer learning, promoting both academic and social development for G&T children and all students in their classroom.

6.4.4. Case M

Identification

School-wide identification

In this case, all teachers except Megan provided insights into the identification process at their respective schools. Mary, Melissa, and Michelle detailed various aspects of their schools' identification systems. Mary described a comprehensive identification system that begins with entrance testing and continues with ongoing monitoring of academic achievement. This suggests a focus on identifying G&T children early on and using that information to tailor their education.

> *The identification process for high achievers involves multiple steps to pinpoint these students. Upon enrolment, students undergo tests to assess their abilities. Constant monitoring of their regular achievements in learning also plays a crucial role in differentiation.* (Mary)

Mary further elaborated on this identification system by highlighting the use of frequent, standardised benchmark assessments throughout the year to track progress. This system provides a year-long picture of academic achievement for G&T children:

> *We primarily utilise benchmark assessments to measure the progress of high-achieving students. These benchmark assessments are conducted very regularly, specifically at the end of each half-term, and we have two half-terms per term. So, in essence, we conduct benchmark assessments four times a year – at the end of each half-term and the end of the academic year. These assessments are comprehensive and play a vital role in gauging the progress of all students, including high achievers.* (Mary)

Melissa described an identification system that relies heavily on standardised testing throughout the year. Melissa also used a specific method for younger students, comparing performance against grade-level peers. This suggests a focus on identifying students who are significantly ahead of their grade level academically:

> *We conduct evaluations throughout the academic year using a standardised test, which serves as the foundation for our analysis. For example, when working with first-grade students, we employ five specific books at school. From these books, we carefully select key sections to assess whether a child demonstrates significantly superior performance compared to their peers.* (Melissa)

Michelle described her school's approach, stating:

> *To identify and measure the progress of more able children, we utilise three assessment points throughout the year, encompassing all subjects, not limited to just the core subjects. Specific tests are conducted for areas such as maths, writing, grammar, reading, and science. Additionally, teacher judgement is employed for subjects like history and geography.* (Michelle)

These insights highlight the variations in school-wide identification processes for G&T students. While all three schools utilised standardised testing and focus on academic achievement, they differ in the comprehensiveness, frequency of assessments, and emphasis on early identification.

Teacher-specific identification

In this case, all teachers except Megan provided insights into the identification process at their respective schools, highlighting variations in comprehensiveness, frequency of assessments,

and emphasis on early identification. None of the identification processes mentioned by these teachers involved teacher nominations or included non-academic areas. These teachers stated that they did not use different identification and monitoring tools outside of the existing system at their schools. Here, a notable point is that Michelle's school approach differs somewhat from the others, along with Megan's, as she previously mentioned:

> *Additionally, teacher judgment is employed for subjects like history and geography.* (Michelle)

However, Michelle did not provide any comments regarding assessments conducted within her own classroom, which could be interpreted as her relying on guidance from the subject leader in this regard.

On the other hand, Megan, whose school lacks a formal identification system, described her approach as more informal, emphasising observation and communication with students and parents to identify talents or interests:

> *At the primary school level, children are typically open and receptive. If I notice that a student has a talent or a specific interest, I encourage them to discuss it with their parents. Additionally, I communicate with their teachers to discuss how we can support the child's development further. While many of these students are already involved in clubs or extracurricular activities related to their interests, sometimes they are not. In those instances, I direct them towards opportunities for education and enrichment in their chosen field.* (Megan)

Megan's approach stands out in its flexibility and emphasis on personalised attention. While other teachers rely on structured assessment systems within their schools, Megan takes a more proactive role in identifying talents and interests by closely observing students and fostering open communication with both students and parents. Her approach not only allows for the identification of 'giftedness and talent' in academic areas but also promotes a holistic understanding of students' individual strengths and passions. As explained in the description of cases section, all schools in this case offer various enrichment activities. In this regard, another noteworthy observation is that, except for Megan, none of the teachers in these schools directed students to enrichment activities based on their identified talents and interests. Thus, it could be suggested that these clubs are chosen according to students' preferences, with little to no involvement of teacher guidance in this selection process.

Student-centred approach to provision

Differentiation for all

In this case, while all teachers share the common goal of creating engaging learning experiences for their students through differentiation, their approaches showcase the multifaceted nature of differentiation. Mary utilised tiered activities, a form of differentiation, to provide a standard activity for everyone followed by additional challenging sheets specifically for G&T children. This approach ensures a solid foundation for all students while offering additional challenges for G&T children.

> *Personally, as a teacher, I aim to incorporate modern and engaging activities for all students. My approach involves using higher-level activities to differentiate the work for high achievers. I typically start with a standard activity for everyone and then provide additional challenging sheets specifically for high achievers.* (Mary)

Megan highlighted the benefits of adaptive teaching. She emphasised tailoring instruction to individual needs, mentioning options like different assignments or games. However, she acknowledged the challenges of large class sizes and behaviour issues in state schools, which can hinder implementation.

> *For me, adaptive teaching is a preferred practice. It allows me to tailor my approach to each student's specific needs, whether it means giving them different assignments in class or offering various games during physical education lessons. However, it is worth noting that the class size in a state school can pose challenges, especially when dealing with behaviour issues.* (Megan)

Melissa focused on creating diverse question sets to differentiate instruction and address the needs of G&T children. Her approach prioritised preventing boredom and disinterest through personalised instruction. She tailored tasks based on students' level of readiness, providing examples like assigning a simpler project for younger students:

> *I prioritise the differentiation especially through the creation of diverse question sets, to address the unique needs of talented students and prevent them from becoming bored*

> *or disinterested. My approach involves tailoring instruction to each student's level. For instance, in a project, I may assign a more straightforward task, such as designing an airplane engine, for second-grade students. Once a student completes the task, I then challenge another student with a more complex project. This personalised approach ensures that each student receives instruction that aligns with their abilities.* (Melissa)

Michella emphasised that assessment abilities and strong subject knowledge are crucial for teachers to understand students' levels and differentiate lessons effectively. She also highlighted that this is an ongoing process:

> *I believe a key aspect of effectively teaching more able children at the primary level is having a strong foundation in assessment for learning. Teachers need to be adept at assessing learning to effectively challenge more able children. Additionally, flexibility and the ability to think on one's feet are crucial characteristics. There are instances when a strategy that worked for a more able child may not yield the same result, requiring quick thinking and adaptability to find alternative approaches.* (Michella)

The insights shared by Mary, Megan, Melissa, and Michella provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse approaches to differentiation in the classroom. While all educators strive to create engaging learning experiences for their students, their methods vary, reflecting the multifaceted nature of differentiation. Collectively, these educators' perspectives underscore the importance of flexibility, adaptability, and a deep understanding of students' individual needs for successful differentiation.

Enrichment

In this subtheme, the enrichment practices employed by Mary, Melissa, Michelle, and Megan to support G&T children are explored. What Mary, Melissa, and Megan have in common is that these activities take place within the school, and teachers guide these children according to their abilities:

> *We encourage participation in extracurricular activities such as science clubs, piano lessons, and chess competitions, allowing high achievers to explore their interests.* (Mary)

> *My focus is on guiding students based on their interests through various school programmes. For instance, I might direct them towards space projects or coding clubs tailored to their specific interests. Additionally, I consistently challenge them with complex projects, establishing higher criteria for their work. This strategy aims to stretch their capabilities, providing a more enriching and engaging learning experience.* (Melissa)

> *While many of these students are already involved in clubs or extracurricular activities related to their interests, sometimes they are not. In those instances, I direct them towards opportunities for education and enrichment in their chosen field.* (Megan)

The notable aspect here is that although Mary and Melissa previously mentioned that they did not conduct any assessment within the classroom apart from the existing identification system at their schools, they still stated that they guide students in selecting extracurricular activities based on their interests. Thus, Mary and Melissa likely rely on their observation skills and interactions with students to identify their interests and potential talents for guidance.

In contrast, Michelle elaborated on the comprehensive support system within the school:

> *We provide various in-school and out-of-school provisions tailored to different subjects for all children, including the more able population. For example, in mathematics, there is a substantial club run by our math lead, specifically designed for identified children and groups. Music offers external opportunities such as instrument lessons, and there is a programme where parents contribute 50% of the funding, while the school covers the remaining 50%, particularly for students displaying notable musical talent. Additionally, we engage more able children in programmes, where a subsidised company is brought in to develop singing talents, allowing children to enjoy singing in a band. In the realm of science, we access external opportunities through a nearby secondary school known for its high standards. This school provides outreach primary work, and we collaborate on STEM activities. We selectively choose specific children to participate in external events and activities, and in some cases, we extend support to interested parents for external engagements or holiday programmes.* (Michelle)

Michelle's description highlights the school's proactive approach to enrichment, encompassing both in-school and out-of-school provisions across various subjects. This commitment aligns with the positive evaluation of the school's extracurricular activities by Ofsted (Mountainview Primary School). The school's efforts to identify and cater to the needs of G&T children demonstrate a comprehensive commitment to enrichment and talent development. This commitment is evident in the financial considerations, such as the school's contribution alongside parents' contributions for music lessons and targeted programmes specifically designed for identified students. Additionally, the school's selective participation in external events and collaboration with nearby institutions further enhances the opportunities available

to G&T children, ensuring a well-rounded approach to their educational and developmental needs.

In conclusion, the exploration of enrichment practices among Mary, Melissa, Michelle, and Megan reveals a range of approaches aimed at supporting G&T children. While Mary, Melissa, and Megan primarily focus on guiding students towards extracurricular activities based on their interests and talents within the school setting, Michelle provides insights into a more structured and comprehensive support system at Mountainview Primary School. Michelle's description highlights a proactive approach that includes both in-school and out-of-school provisions, financial considerations, and selective participation in external events. This commitment reflects the school's dedication to enriching the educational experience and nurturing the talents of G&T children.

Acceleration

In this case, the four teachers, Mary, Megan, Michella, and Melisa, did not mention acceleration among the provisions they have applied or wished to see for these children. Melissa stated that it is not a practice in their schools and expressed her view on the matter:

> *I am cautious about promoting a student to a higher grade based solely on an examination. Instead, I advocate for a separate programme for gifted and talented students. This approach ensures that they have already mastered the material for their current grade before progressing to the next level.* (Melissa)

It could be suggested that Melissa's perspective could indeed be considered parallel to the silence of the other three teachers. She expresses reservations about promoting students solely based on exams and advocates for a separate programme for G&T children. While she does not specifically mention grade skipping or subject-based acceleration, her viewpoint suggests a general cautiousness toward acceleration in any form. Thus, the absence of any mention of acceleration by Mary, Megan, and Michella, along with Melissa's reservations, suggests that

either they do not utilise acceleration practices in their school or do not consider them a significant aspect of gifted education.

Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions

Peer learning

In this case, Michele did not explicitly mention grouping practices as a provision or part of his teaching approach to educating G&T children. The other three teachers implied that they used it as a provision in their daily practices. Mary and Melissa both express their preference for using mixed ability grouping strategies in their teaching approaches. Mary explicitly mentions her utilisation of mixed ability grouping in her teaching practices. She further elaborated on the benefits, such as students learning from each other, with G&T children serving as role models. From this, it can be suggested that Mary aimed not only to support academic development but also to foster social and emotional growth among G&T children.

> *One notable approach is grouping high achievers during discussions or activities. This allows them to share ideas and solutions, fostering collaborative learning. By implementing group practices, especially in subjects like science, students learn from each other, and the high achiever ones serve as role models. Additionally, I use varied teaching methods such as discussions, writing on whiteboards, and collaborative table work, creating an environment where high achievers naturally support their peers. (Mary)*

Similarly, Melissa advocated for mixed ability grouping, particularly for G&T children:

> *I encourage G&T children to attend group projects, especially with classmates they may be having conflicts with, to foster better relationships.* (Melissa)

In contrast, Megan did not explicitly mention her stance on mixed ability grouping. Instead, she focused on the importance of reflective practices:

> *We have a system in place where students reflect on their days, both good and bad experiences, in journals or through verbal discussions.* (Megan)

From Megan's statement, it seems that she focused on implementing reflective practices rather than explicitly stating a preference for mixed ability grouping or addressing the distribution of G&T children within groups. Unlike Mary and Melissa, who specifically mentioned their use of mixed ability grouping, Megan's emphasis on reflective practices suggests a different approach to student development. Therefore, it cannot be conclusively inferred that Megan preferred or utilised mixed ability grouping or assigned a specific role to G&T children within groups based on the provided quote.

6.4.5 Calypso Primary School

Identification

School-wide identification

John, the headteacher at Calypso Primary School, outlined their identification system G&T children as follows:

> *Throughout the year, we assess gifted and talented students using various tools, including benchmark tests. Our assessment process involves a baseline assessment at the beginning of the school year in September, followed by end-of-term assessments at key points such as autumn, spring, and summer. These three data collection points play a crucial role in monitoring and measuring students' progress. The assessments serve a dual purpose, contributing not only to the identification of gifted and talented students but also to the ongoing monitoring of their academic development.* (John)

Calypso Primary School's system demonstrated a thoughtful approach to G&T identification. The emphasis on regular, data-driven assessments allows for the early identification and

ongoing support of G&T children. However, this assessment framework solely focuses on academic areas, lacking evaluation in non-academic domains.

Teacher-specific identification

While Calypso Primary School demonstrates a structured system for identifying and monitoring G&T children through regular, data-driven academic assessments, teachers in this case did not mention implementing any other individualised systems within their classrooms.

Student-centred approach to provision

Differentiation for all

Calypso Primary School's Headteacher, John, underscored the significance of differentiation for all students, stating:

> *In a state primary school setting, where teachers are often delivering content at an expected level, differentiation becomes essential. This allows students who may be working below or above the expected level to receive tailored instruction that meets their needs.* (John)

This statement emphasises the crucial role of differentiation in ensuring that each student receives instruction customised to their individual learning requirements, thereby promoting academic growth and success for all learners. Alex emphasised the importance of differentiation, stating that being an effective teacher goes beyond subject knowledge; it

involves the ability to differentiate instruction and anticipate challenges for individual students, which is an ongoing process:

> *While having a strong grasp of the subject matter is non-negotiable for teachers, effectiveness goes beyond that. It involves the ability to differentiate instruction and progress through lessons at the right pace and time. Being effective means anticipating challenges for individual students, such as knowing that a student like Tom might find a particular aspect of the lesson challenging. In such cases, the teacher should be well-prepared with resources, objectives, and a breakdown of the material. It is about delving into the minute details to ensure that the teaching approach has a positive impact not only on one child but on the entire group.* (Alex)

David went beyond explaining his perspective on differentiation and described a tiered system of differentiation in his classroom, represented by bronze, silver, and gold levels. He elaborated:

> *My approach involves a tiered system represented by bronze, silver, and gold levels. The more able students are differentiated by being expected to progress to gold, with additional extensions provided for those who reach that level.* (David)

Sarah outlined practices for all, emphasising the provision of extension and challenge tasks designed to stretch their capabilities and prevent boredom:

> *We implement specific practices for all children in our classroom. For every lesson, we consistently provide extension and challenge tasks designed for students who reach the highest levels of understanding in the subject matter.* (Sarah)

On the other hand, Emily added a different perspective to the discussion on differentiation:

> *Differentiation, although having both pros and cons, is a common practice. On the positive side, it allows tailoring content to individual needs, making it more accessible for students. However, there is a potential drawback, especially for those who may need extra support. The risk lies in assuming their capabilities and providing work that might limit their opportunities to challenge themselves adequately.* (Emily)

Differentiation encompasses not only challenging tasks but also adjusting the difficulty level of content based on students' readiness and providing additional support when needed (Tomlinson, 2014). Emily seems to emphasise the provision of challenging activities and tasks exclusively and overlook the broader aspects of differentiation.

Overall, this case showcases a variety of approaches to implementing differentiation. These approaches share a common goal: to create an inclusive learning environment where all students, regardless of ability, are supported and challenged to reach their full potential.

Enrichment

Ofsted had provided a positive evaluation regarding enrichment activities for this school, stating that the curriculum extends to both in-school and out-of-school clubs and events, designed to foster self-esteem and a sense of belonging among the students. The collective insights from the teachers reflect a concerted effort towards enriching the educational experience of G&T students at the school, aligning with the positive evaluation received from Ofsted. In this regard, Alex, although not explicitly referring to enrichment activities, implies support for tailored education by suggesting opportunities for G&T children to work in focused groups outside the classroom, indicating a system that accommodates their need:

> *For high-ability children, having opportunities to work together in their own focused groups, perhaps outside the classroom, can be beneficial. These small groups allow them to delve deeper into the subject matter without the constraints of a larger class.* (Alex)

Like Alex, Both Emily and John highlighted the crucial role of enrichment activities in fostering intellectual growth and deeper learning:

> *Enrichment activities in our school offers a valuable avenue for high-ability students. It provides them with opportunities to engage in challenging and stimulating tasks beyond the standard curriculum. This is crucial for their intellectual growth and satisfaction.* (Emily)

> *In our school we have a wide range of extracurricular activities, which not only keep gifted and talented students challenged but also contribute to the concept of mastery. Mastering a subject deeply enables students to apply their knowledge in various contexts, promoting a more profound understanding.* (John)

Sarah and David highlighted the motivational aspect of enrichment and its impact on non-academic development:

> *Enrichment allows these students to showcase their abilities in competitions, projects, and other activities, fostering a sense of accomplishment.* (Sarah)

> *In addition to in-class provisions, I believe in the value of extracurricular activities. Our school offers various clubs, such as chess and science clubs, which provide further opportunities for enrichment and engagement.* (David)

The collective insights paint a picture of a thriving ecosystem of enrichment at Calypso Primary School. This ecosystem combines tailored in-class work, stimulating extracurricular activities, opportunities for intellectual growth and deeper learning, and avenues for students to showcase their abilities and gain a sense of accomplishment. This multi-faceted approach aligns perfectly with the positive Ofsted evaluation and ensures that G&T have the tools and support they need to flourish not just academically, but also as well-rounded individuals.

It is notable that none of the teachers mentioned directing students towards these extracurricular activities, which aligns with the observation that teachers at this school do not make any nominations or classroom-based identifications apart from the structured identification system. This suggests that students engage in these enrichment activities based on their own interests and desires, further emphasising the student-driven nature of enrichment at Calypso Primary School.

Acceleration

In this case, only Sarah did not provide a comment on acceleration. John highlighted a prevailing philosophy that prioritised mastery over simply progressing through content. This suggests a school culture that emphasises deep understanding over rapid coverage of material, potentially limiting the need for acceleration:

> *The emphasis here is often on mastery rather than accelerating through content for coverage. This approach allows students to delve deeply into the material, ensuring a thorough understanding rather than simply moving quickly through the curriculum.* (John)

Both Alex and Emily acknowledged acceleration as an option but express reservations:

> *Acceleration, in the form of progressing through material at a faster pace or considering grade skipping, is another aspect to explore. However, careful consideration is necessary to ensure that students are not just accelerated academically but are also emotionally and socially supported. That is why it is not widespread in our school.* (Alex)

> *It is essential to be mindful of potential isolation when implementing acceleration. While acceleration allows high-ability students to progress at a faster pace, there is a risk of isolating them from their peers.* (Emily)

Alex discussed the potential negative effects, while Emily elaborated on this by highlighting grade skipping as a potential problem for peer isolation.

Here, David's viewpoint stands out for its focus solely on the potential negative effects of acceleration, particularly grade skipping, as it pertains to the full range of a child's development, including social and emotional maturity:

> *When considering acceleration, such as grade skipping, I find it challenging to fully embrace the concept. The grade skipping form, as it currently stands, does not adequately encompass the nuances of a child's maturity and overall development.* (David)

The overall perspective suggests a school community cautious about acceleration, particularly grade skipping. In this regard, the emphasis on mastery and concerns about the social and emotional development of children contribute to this cautious approach.

Peer Learning

At Calypso Primary School, the teachers' perspectives on grouping practices reveal a spectrum of approaches aimed at fostering collaborative learning and supporting students with diverse abilities. Alex preferred a combination of mixed ability and ability grouping strategies. He believed that grouping students based on their abilities can be beneficial for boosting the success of high achievers and fostering a collaborative learning environment:

> *A more optimal situation would involve having dedicated staff for every class, enabling the establishment of intervention groups. Such groups could significantly contribute to the success of high achievers, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, these high achievers can play a supportive role within the classroom, helping peers and reinforcing the idea that hard work leads to success.* (Alex)

Emily expressed a preference for mixed ability grouping and elaborated on how she implements it:

> *In my classroom, I opt for a strategy where greater depth children are dispersed across various tables. This arrangement facilitates interaction among peers, allowing them to engage in discussions and offer assistance to one another. Not only does this benefit the greater depth children by providing them an opportunity to support their peers, but it also creates an inclusive environment for other students who may find it more comfortable seeking help from a classmate. This dynamic not only boosts the confidence of high-ability children as they assist their friends but also fosters a positive atmosphere where all students feel at ease seeking assistance.* (Emily)

Emily's strategy highlighted the importance of collaborative learning and peer support in enhancing the educational experience for all students. By encouraging G&T children to assist their peers, she not only reinforces their confidence but also promotes a sense of responsibility and empathy among students.

David presented a different approach by focusing on pairing students based on their abilities rather than grouping them:

> *I refrain from utilising ability groups in my classroom. Instead, I prefer pairing a student with a lower ability with one of higher or a student with a middle ability with one of higher learning. This approach allows the less able child to have something to aspire to, fostering a sense of motivation and challenge. I believe that pairing students based on their abilities creates a more conducive learning environment than grouping them solely with peers of similar abilities.* (David)

David's approach of pairing students based on their abilities rather than mixed ability grouping raises some concerns that require careful consideration. While his intention to foster motivation and challenge among students is commendable, there are potential risks associated with this practice. One major risk is that while G&T children may benefit from serving as mentors or role models for their peers, there is a possibility that their educational needs could be overlooked in such pairings (Allan, 1991; Van Tassel-Baska, Landrum and Peterson, 1992; MacIntyre and Ireson, 2002).

Sarah and John similarly emphasised the importance of leveraging the strengths of G&T children in the classroom. However, unlike David's approach of pairing them with low-ability students, both Sarah and John advocated for assigning them roles within mixed ability group that utilise their strengths more broadly:

> *As a teacher, I often engage high-achieving students as resources in the classroom. They might model or explain their thinking, showcasing different approaches to problem-solving. During lessons, I frequently ask them how they worked out a solution, encouraging them to explain it to the class. This sharing of various methods helps create a collaborative learning environment where students learn from each other. High-achieving students, in this role, also become valuable in supporting their peers with different abilities, contributing to a positive peer learning dynamic.* (Sarah)

> *I also explore peer learning, leveraging the strengths of gifted and talented students by allowing them to take on teaching roles or work collaboratively in groups. Rather than relying solely on likeability grouping, I consider the specific strands of knowledge or skills that the students possess when forming groups.* (John)

The case of Calypso Primary School exemplifies a range of teacher-centric approaches to fostering collaborative learning and supporting students with diverse abilities. While these approaches all fall under the umbrella of a teacher-directed philosophy, they showcase a spectrum of strategies, including structured collaboration, targeted pairings, peer interaction, and leveraging the strengths of G&T children.

6.4.6 Discussion

In this section, while exploring the identification procedures and provisions utilised by teachers for G&T children, I discovered a lack of clear-cut distinctions among the cases that could be interpreted across all subthemes and themes.

Regarding identification, the cases showcased a spectrum of approaches, ranging from structured assessment systems to informal teacher observations. While some schools had formal identification processes in place, others relied on more informal methods. While some schools had formal identification processes in place, measuring children's academic performance, others relied on more informal methods. One school mentioned seeking expert assistance and collaborating with an external organisation to identify these children. Notably, academic achievement stood out as a key factor in the identification process across the cases.

Moreover, the importance of teacher expertise and the consideration of non-academic areas in the identification process were underscored in several cases. However, a notable observation was the lack of consistent teacher-specific identification methods within classrooms across the cases. It stood out that schools with structured identification systems generally did not heavily involve teacher nominations in the identification process. Conversely, schools without formal systems showcased active participation of teachers in the identification process.

This discrepancy prompts questions about the efficacy of each method. Structured systems, primarily focusing on academic areas, might overlook students with talents in non-academic domains who are recognised by teachers. On the other hand, relying solely on teacher observations may introduce biases or inconsistencies, regardless of whether students excel in academic or non-academic areas.

In terms of provision, all teachers across the four cases prioritised creating inclusive learning environments through differentiation. Each case showcases diverse approaches to tailor instruction to individual student needs. Case L emphasised personalised learning via extension tasks and flexible curriculum delivery. Similarly, Case A underscores inclusivity, ensuring all students access appropriate resources and growth opportunities. In Case M, teacher utilised

tiered activities and differentiation methods to prevent disengagement and cater to diverse needs. Meanwhile, at Calypso Primary School, differentiation is deemed essential for meeting individual learning requirements. Overall, these cases underscore the significance of differentiation strategies to foster academic success for all students, highlighting the importance of inclusive practices in education.

When it comes to enrichment, the examination of the four cases sheds light on the diverse approaches taken by educators to enrich the educational experience of G&T children. Across all cases, a common thread emerges: the recognition of the importance of tailoring enrichment activities to meet the needs of G&T children. While some teachers advocated for out-of-school programmes and clubs, others emphasised inclusive practices within the school community. Similarly, some underscore the significance of tailored extracurricular activities, while others highlight a more structured approach involving both in-school and out-of-school provisions. Despite these variations, the overarching goal remains consistent: to provide opportunities for intellectual growth, skill development, and personal fulfilment for G&T students. One notable aspect observed across these cases is the voluntary participation of students in enrichment activities, without direct guidance from teachers. This may raise the risk of perceiving enrichment activities as purely recreational rather than integral to education.

While differentiation and enrichment are widely embraced strategies for supporting G&T children in the cases examined, acceleration presents a more nuanced picture. Teacher expressed diverse viewpoints on its implementation. It is worth noting that some teachers participating in this research used the term 'differentiation,' while others specifically referred to 'adaptive teaching.' Crucially, regardless of the terminology used, their discussions of practical applications often revealed an emphasis on supporting students within the same lesson objectives and core content, for example, through the creation of diverse question sets or varied scaffolding, rather than providing entirely different materials or topics.

The examination of acceleration practices reveals concerns regarding its potential negative impacts on social and emotional development, particularly concerning grade skipping. Furthermore, observations about government policies not aligning with widespread implementation underscore the regulatory challenges surrounding acceleration practices. Some educators offer differing perspectives, with one emphasising the positive outcomes of acceleration based on previous experience, while another cautions against its potential social

and psychological implications. The absence of discussion on the topic in certain contexts suggests a lack of implementation or consideration. This diversity of perspectives is evident at Calypso Primary School. While one comment reflects a philosophy emphasising mastery over rapid progression, others express reservations about acceleration, citing concerns about social and emotional support and potential isolation. Another perspective adds weight to the cautionary approach, highlighting the complexities of acceleration and its impact on holistic child development. Overall, the discussions underscore that acceleration in any form is not a widely adopted practice. There is a general preference for keeping children within their same age groups, with little room for subject-based acceleration. Instead, there is a focus on in-depth exploration of subjects.

The concluding provision to be examined here concerns the grouping practices implemented by teachers for G&T children. One significant aspect that warrants attention is the diverse array of perspectives on peer learning, particularly in the realm of grouping practices. Some teachers advocate for ability grouping to cater to the needs of G&T children, placing emphasis on socialisation and enhancing success through targeted intervention groups. For instance, certain teachers may opt to assign G&T children to specialised intervention groups to provide them with additional challenges and support tailored to their abilities.

On the other hand, there are those who prefer mixed ability grouping, aiming to cultivate dynamic learning environments where students collaborate and bolster one another's learning experiences. By focusing on collaboration skills and fostering inclusivity, this approach allows G&T children to work alongside peers of varying abilities, facilitating mutual learning and support. This mixed ability grouping may involve pairing G&T children with low-ability peers or utilising G&T children as role models within the classroom without forming a separate group. However, such practices may pose the risk of overlooking the needs of G&T children amidst the diverse range of abilities present in the group (Allan, 1991; Van Tassel-Baska, Landrum and Peterson, 1992; MacIntyre and Ireson, 2002).

It is worth noting that some educators do not explicitly address grouping practices, which may suggest a preference for homogeneous grouping or alternative approaches among them. The absence of discussion on grouping by certain teachers could indicate a lean towards homogeneous grouping strategies. In summary, teachers' decisions regarding grouping practices seem to be driven more by their individual teaching philosophies rather than

institutional directives. Although approaches to provisions like differentiation, enrichment, and acceleration may differ among teachers, they are often integrated as part of the broader school system.

6.5 Integrated findings

This section moves beyond the individual presentation of results to offer a holistic synthesis of the key findings pertaining to teacher views and practices related to G&T children among the teachers who participated in this research in England. By integrating these observations gleaned from the data I collected and analysed, this synthesis aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the landscape of gifted education in the English schools encompassed by this research.

Teachers' conceptualisation of the term 'Gifted and Talented' emerged as a foundational element shaping their subsequent practices and attitudes. One of the primary objectives of this research was to uncover teachers' preferred terminology for describing children with the ability or potential to develop significantly ahead of their peers in academic or non-academic areas. In this regard, teachers participating from England referred to this group using a striking variety of terms. These included 'Gifted and Talented,' 'More Able,' 'Most Able,' 'Higher Prior Attaining,' 'High Achiever,' and 'Greater Depth.' No single term emerged as more dominant in terms of usage across the sample. Critically, it was observed that the terminology preferences among teachers in England were often rooted in their exposure to former policy documents ('Gifted and Talented' - DfES, 2001; Loft *et al*., 2020), current assessment frameworks used by Ofsted ('More Able,' 'Most Able,' 'Higher Prior Attaining,' and 'High Achiever' - Ofsted, 2013; Gov.uk, 2023b), or the National Curriculum Assessment ('Greater Depth' - Gloucestershire County Council, 2012). This direct link between terminology and policy/assessment structures highlights how external mandates significantly influence the language used in schools. The pervasive variety of terms used by teachers in England to describe this group, as evidenced in

these findings, underscores the inherent ambiguity within the terminology surrounding gifted education, a challenge previously noted in the literature (White *et al*., 2003; Smedsrud, 2020).

When it comes to how teachers in England conceptualised the term 'gifted and talented,' while some encompassed various talent domains alongside academic achievements, the majority predominantly focused on academic success. This reflects the alignment of their definitions with the national curriculum's focus on academic achievement (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft e*t al*., 2020).

Furthermore, a critical duality permeated teachers' perspectives on these terms. While participants in England generally acknowledged the perceived utility of these labels for highlighting differences and aiding lesson planning, this utilitarian view was starkly contrasted by their profound recognition of the potential negative effects. Teachers articulated significant concerns regarding the detrimental impact of such labels on students' psychology and motivation, arguing that these terms often oversimplify complex abilities and potential, and, crucially, could inadvertently foster divisive environments among students. This acute awareness of both the superficial convenience and deep-seated pitfalls of established terminology created a tension, leading to a distinct tendency among teachers to prefer alternative, often more descriptive and less categorising, terms in informal discourse, explicitly acknowledging the limitations of formal labels.

Beyond preferred terminology, the substantive conceptualisation of 'gifted and talented' by teachers revealed a pronounced academic bias. While a minority encompassed diverse talent domains, the overwhelming majority predominantly focused on academic success. This narrow definition directly reflects and, arguably, reinforces the national curriculum's greater focus on academic achievement (Gloucestershire County Council, 2012; Loft *et al*., 2020), potentially overlooking or devaluing other forms of talent. This academic emphasis was further evidenced in teachers' views on student characteristics, where they consistently highlighted cognitive skills like 'quick learning' and 'strong memory' (Kuncel *et al*., 2004). While seemingly positive, this dominant focus on academically oriented traits, as similarly noted by Moon and Brighton (2008), raises concerns that it may limit the recognition of giftedness and talent in non-traditional areas and perpetuate a narrow, performance-driven view of exceptional ability.

In terms of the nature versus nurture debate on 'giftedness and talent,' while teachers showed varying inclinations, a significant finding was the predominant emphasis on environmental factors. This inclination, while aligning with the contemporary understanding that giftedness and talent is a developmental process rather than a fixed trait (Gagné, 1995; Feldman, 2003; Subotnik *et al*., 2011), still coexisted with a persistent, though limited, acknowledgment of genetic influences. This development-focused view among teachers is important for advocating supportive educational strategies and challenging fixed ideas that could limit talent development.

When it comes to challenges in educating G&T children, teachers deal with both policy-related and practical difficulties. While teachers in England generally hold a positive attitude towards inclusive education, their ability to effectively cater to G&T students is significantly hindered by systemic limitations. There is a fundamental tension between the rhetoric of inclusive education policies and the practical difficulties of adequately addressing the needs of all students, particularly those who are gifted and talented. The current system often prioritises support for other student groups, potentially at the expense of G&T children, creating a paradox where inclusivity inadvertently leads to a lack of appropriate challenge for gifted and talented children. This issue is compounded by overarching general education policies, such as league tables and a strict national curriculum, which are perceived to negatively impact G&T education by emphasising standardised outcomes over the flexibility and differentiated instruction these students require.

Beyond policy, teachers in England face direct practical challenges in their daily work: a pervasive shortage of educational resources specifically tailored for G&T children remains a significant obstacle, even when teachers try to leverage personal networks for additional materials. This mirrors findings by Rutigliano and Quarshie (2021), highlighting a critical lack of targeted support at the classroom level. Furthermore, time constraints frequently hinder teachers' ability to customise lessons, as the pressures of a packed curriculum and administrative tasks limit their capacity for individualised attention and enrichment, a challenge echoed in broader literature (Smets, 2017; Roiha and Polso, 2021). Another critical concern is the lack of dedicated focus on G&T children in initial teacher education (ITE) programs and ongoing professional development, leaving many teachers feeling unprepared and lacking the specialised pedagogical skills needed to identify and nurture giftedness. Although a small number of teachers identified parents' engagement as a challenge, the primary

difficulties lie in these systemic and resource-based limitations. Although teachers generally show a positive attitude toward inclusive education, their ability to meet the needs of G&T children is significantly limited by uniform policies and insufficient targeted support, potentially leading to disengagement and unfulfilled potential for these cohort.

The final aspect I will discuss is the identification and provision for G&T children. In England, the identification of G&T children in the schools involved in this research revealed a varied landscape, ranging from structured assessment systems to informal teacher observations. Some schools employed formal processes primarily based on academic performance, while others leaned on more casual methods like relying solely on teacher observations or evaluating classroom performance. Acknowledging their limitations, some schools also sought expert assistance and collaborated with external organisations to aid in identification. Crucially, academic performance consistently emerged as a key factor in these identification processes. However, this reliance on academic metrics might inadvertently overlook diverse forms of giftedness and talent, such as creative or leadership abilities, which may not always manifest through traditional academic measures.

Regarding provisions, the findings highlighted a spectrum of enrichment activities, including both in-school and out-of-school programmes and clubs. A notable observation was that students' participation in these programmes was largely voluntary, often without direct teacher encouragement. While voluntary engagement can foster intrinsic motivation, a lack of teacher encouragement could suggest a missed opportunity for proactive guidance, potentially leading to underrepresentation of G&T students in activities that could profoundly benefit their development.

Conversely, acceleration practices found little widespread support among teachers. Concerns about the potential negative impact on students, particularly regarding social adjustment problems, led to significant reservations about any form of acceleration. This aligns with existing research by Rambo and McCoach (2012) and Miravete (2023), which indicates a broader hesitance among educators towards acceleration. This widespread reservation, while understandable from a pastoral perspective, raises questions about whether the system adequately addresses the pace at which some G&T children can learn, potentially stifling their intellectual progress.

Finally, grouping practices were another notable provision. While some teachers supported ability grouping, others favoured mixed-ability grouping, which involved pairing G&T students with peers of different abilities to promote collaboration and inclusivity. This dual approach highlights differences in teaching philosophies regarding ability grouping, with some teachers prioritising the academic needs of G&T students and viewing it as a way to maximise academic potential, while others emphasise inclusive practices and the social benefits of mixed-ability classrooms.

Chapter 7: Türkiye-presentation of findings

7.1 Introduction

This chapter departs from the previous one by employing secondary data analysis. Here, the focus shifts to analysing existing research identified through a conducted systematic literature review on gifted education in Türkiye. The studies identified through the purposive literature review involve primary school teachers working in state primary schools and their view and practice on G&T children.

Studies involving primary school teachers, as well as teachers from different levels or those working in Science and Art Centres (SAC) or private primary schools, were included in the research if they provided separate evaluations based on the type of school in which the teachers worked. Studies that did not meet this criterion, such as those involving pre-school or high school teachers, or those examining the views and practices of teachers in private schools, or classroom teachers working in SACs, were excluded from the research. In addition, studies published before 1990 were not included in the research, even if they met the criteria (for further insight revisit the 'Purposive literature review' section). This period is particularly relevant as it coincides with the foundation of the current gifted education landscape in Türkiye (for more detailed information, revisit 'Gifted Education in Türkiye-1990 onwards').

When analysing secondary data identified through the systematic literature review, the themes that emerged from the thematic analysis conducted on the primary data in England will be applied to the identified secondary data set from Türkiye. In this context, the relevant data will be subjected to a deductive content analysis (for further insight revisit 'Data analysis' section). Given the inherent limitations of secondary data analysis in addressing the research question, the analyses presented in this chapter will be more concise compared to those conducted for the primary data in the chapter on England.

7.2 Teacher's conceptualisation of the term

Policy-oriented definition

In Chapter 4: Policy, I highlighted that Türkiye is one of the countries with a national definition, identification system, and provision for G&T children (for more detailed information, revisit 'Gifted Education in Türkiye-1990 onwards' section). In this regard, the national definition in Türkiye is as follows: Gifted and talented children are those who are faster learners than their peers, ahead in creativity, art, and leadership capacity, possess special abilities, demonstrate high performance, can comprehend abstract thinking, and enjoy acting independently in their interests (MoNE, 2021a).

As can be seen from this definition, it encompasses not only the academic area but also the non-academic area. In parallel, one of Türkiye's most widespread gifted education initiatives, SAC, employs a range of identification methods that go beyond traditional academic measures to recognise students with exceptional talents in both academic and non-academic domains to meet their needs (for more detailed information, revisit 'Country-wide provision' section).

When it comes to how teachers conceptualise the term 'gifted and talented,' the first study I will examine is Reference 1, which aims to determine teachers' views on G&T children. Classroom teachers and secondary school teachers participated in this research. 323 primary school teachers participated in this study. The data regarding primary school and secondary school teachers were evaluated separately. Teachers were asked, "What do you think are the characteristics of gifted students? Please list as many characteristics as you can." The findings suggest that teachers' views did not differ according to the level of education (p.43). Among the responses, the most frequently mentioned characteristics attributed to cognitive traits were "*curious*," "*creative*," and "*quick learner*." In this research, "*having developed talent in art or music*" was mentioned by only five teachers, indicating that few considered children gifted and talented in non-academic areas. (p.40)

Reference 2 aimed to address the tendencies and experiences of primary school teachers regarding the definition, identification, and education of G&T children. 13 Teachers from both private and state primary schools participated in this research. The teachers were asked, "What does the concept of a gifted child mean for primary school teachers?" The responses were categorised into four subthemes as "*with regard to having mental abilities*," "*with regard to having a special talent*," "*with regard to creative thinking skill*," and "*with regard to social relations*" (p.1369) The study found that while primary school teachers working in public schools mostly define the concept of giftedness and talent based on their mental abilities and academic achievement, this perspective differentiated them from teachers working in state schools (p.1376). Some of the teachers' responses included the following:

> *Students with an intelligence score that is above the normal intelligence level.* (p.1369)
>
> *Means being distinctly ahead of the same age group with regard to mental and academic development characteristics.* (p.1369)

Reference 3 is a mixed study aimed to determine the knowledge level of classroom teachers regarding the characteristics of G&T children and to examine the effect of the education they receive on identifying these students on their knowledge level. 8 primary school teachers participated in this research. In this research, the "Behavioural Characteristics of Gifted Students Scale" was administered to the participating classroom teachers. This scale consists of items related to the characteristics of G&T children. Upon examining the teachers' responses, it was found that majority of teacher selected items attributing to students' cognitive characteristics, such as "*shows a willingness to solve difficult math problems*," "*asks questions to learn the causes, evidence, and outcomes of events*," (p.183)

Reference 4 is conducted mixed-method research to determine the knowledge levels of classroom teachers regarding G&T children and their characteristics.55 primary school teachers participated in this research. In the qualitative part of the study, teachers were asked, "How would you describe a gifted child?" Most teachers involved in the study identified giftedness primarily through academic ability. They described G&T children as those "*who can quickly learn and easily grasp detailed information.*" 6 teachers emphasised behavioural and performance traits, describing G&T children as those "*who perform above average in their tasks*" and "*children with imagination, who can think independently, design projects, and respond to questions quickly and diversely with deep and broad thoughts*." (p.21) Upon

examining the teachers' responses, it can be suggested that while teachers tended to emphasise academic area, they often overlook non-academic areas in their definitions.

Reference 5 aligns with prior observations. This quantitative study explored 298 classroom teachers' awareness of G&T children. The research employed a survey to assess teachers' understanding of G&T characteristics. The results revealed that a significant majority of teachers recognised academic strengths such as:

> *Gifted children's academic achievements are not confined to a single area.* (p.35-36)
>
> *Gifted children have extensive vocabularies.* (p.36)
>
> *Gifted children are conceptually advanced for their age.* (p.37)
>
> *Gifted children tell creative stories and write.* (p.38)
>
> *Gifted children perform unusual mathematical operations and solve problems effortlessly.* (p.38)

However, a key finding emerged: less than half of the teachers acknowledged "*Gifted children are very interested in the arts.*" as a potential trait of G&T children. (p.37) This highlights a potential gap between teachers' understanding and the national definition, which encompasses both academic and non-academic domains (MoNE, 2021a).

Reference 6 is a qualitative study aimed at exploring the observations, experiences, and challenges faced by school stakeholders in developing and implementing individualised education programmes for G&T children. This research involved participation from teachers across various disciplines, including 9 classroom teachers. Within a particular section of Reference 6, the study investigated classroom teachers' view on G&T students. The research inquired about how teachers defined G&T characteristics and explored whether they observe distinct cognitive, behavioural, and socio-emotional traits that differentiate these students from their typically developing peers. This study also yielded findings like Reference 5. The majority of the classroom teachers who participated in this research defined G&T children as having abilities or potential in academic areas and did not include non-academic areas in their conceptualisation. Some of the views expressed by the classroom teachers participating in this research are as follows:

> *Gifted and talented students are different in every aspect, not just academically. From a perspective and worldview standpoint, I believe G&T students' perspectives are somewhat different. Not only academically, but I see and observe that they excel in whatever they put their hands on, whether it is music, painting, or any other area. If I were to share this from my own daughter's perspective, I would not even count how many musical instruments she plays simultaneously anymore. Because when she picks up a musical instrument, she starts playing it as if she has known it for years. On the other hand, when she takes a brush, she starts painting like she has been a painter for years. So, these kinds of children, gifted and talented students, truly have different perspectives in every sense. It is a culture that comes from within themselves; I might describe these children as being born with a broad cultural knowledge as if they were born with it naturally. Of course, their academic achievements differentiate them from other typically developing students in terms of cognitive abilities.* (p.69)

> *Gifted students' speech and interests in the classroom, as well as their different attitudes compared to their peers, can be noticed through their interactions. Compared to their peers, their verbal, numerical, social, and artistic interests and knowledge differ. They are constantly questioning and curious. You cannot easily convince them on something that doesn't make sense to them. They always question when rules are established.* (p.69)

As seen in the two examples above, teachers participating in the research attribute being gifted and talented not only to academic areas but also to non-academic domains. In contrast, another classroom teacher whose views were shared in the study defines these students exclusively in terms of cognitive and academic aspects, as illustrated below:

> *Firstly, I understand them from being more active, having a rich vocabulary, feeling more comfortable in new environments they encounter, learning their friends' names faster. Their quick learning, starting to use what they have learned more quickly, their success in mathematical operations, richness of vocabulary, and using words correctly are the first cognitive properties that come to my mind.* (P3, p.69)

However, the study named as Reference 7 on the views of 155 primary school teachers regarding the concept of giftedness and talent and their education differs significantly from the examples above. In this research, participants' responses to the question "What is giftedness and talent?" were categorised into specific groups. For instance, responses such as *'being more successful than peers*,' *'having advanced knowledge*,' and *'demonstrating exceptional performance in a specific area*' were grouped under the category of "*being successful*." Overall, the responses were organised into four main categories:

> *Possessing talent/ability/skill.* (p.429)

> *Having different characteristics.* (p.429)

Being successful. (p.429)

Having high IQ/intelligence. (p.429)

Here, the majority of participants used the category of "*possessing talent/ability/skill*" to define giftedness and talent, referring to being exceptionally talented in various fields such as art, music, or other areas beyond the norm. Interestingly, only 18 participants provided definitions of giftedness and talent under the category of having high IQ/intelligence, which includes cognitive abilities.

Taken together, the seven studies I examined on how primary school teachers conceptualised the term 'gifted and talented' reveal varying alignments with the national definition. In this context, Reference 7 shows that many teachers focused on non-academic areas in their conceptualisation. In contrast, the definitions provided in the other three studies (Reference, 1;5; 6) primarily emphasised academic areas while also encompassing non-academic aspects. This approach in References 1,5, 6, and 7 is more in line with the national definition, as the teachers' definitions encompass both academic and non-academic areas. However, the three studies (Reference, 2;3;4) suggested that teachers predominantly focus on academic areas when defining giftedness and talent. This suggests a potential discrepancy between the national definition and teachers' view, emphasising the need for greater awareness and understanding of non-academic domains in identifying and supporting G&T children. In the England section of this research, the emphasis teachers placed on non-academic areas when conceptualising 'giftedness and talent' parallels the studies I analysed earlier. In both countries, a significant proportion of teachers working in state primary school focus on academic areas over non-academic area when conceptualising the term 'gifted and talented.'

Giftedness and Talent extending existing definitions

Under this theme, I will analyse studies where classroom teachers described this concept using characteristic features and studies directly related to teachers' views on the characteristics of

G&T children. In this regard, the first study I will discuss, as mentioned in the previous theme, is Reference 7. In this research, teachers' definitions were classified into four main groups:

> *Possessing talent/ability/skill.* (p.429)
>
> *Having different characteristics.* (p.429)
>
> *Being successful.* (p.429)
>
> *Having high IQ/intelligence.* (p.429)

The most frequently mentioned category was "*possessing talent/ability/skill*," under which teachers conceptualised the term by referring to cognitive areas, such as "*the ability to grasp subjects quickly*," alongside subcategories covering talent areas like "*having exceptional abilities beyond the norm*. " (p.428)

Looking at these categories, the second most frequently mentioned category was "*having different characteristics*." Under this category, teachers associated G&T children with affective characteristics such as:

> *Exhibiting behaviour that is above and different from peers and the expected norm.* (p.428)
>
> *Presenting different perspectives and solutions.* (p.428)

When teachers were directly asked about the characteristics of these students in the second part of the study, their responses included positive affective characteristics such as "*Curious*," and "*strong communication skills*," as well as negative characteristics like "*antisocial behaviour*" and "*hyperactivity*." (p.430)

Like the findings reported in Reference 8, this research aimed to explore the experiences of 15 classroom teachers in identifying G&T children and nominating them for SAC. The sample consisted of teachers who had previously referred students that were later identified as gifted and talented. In this research, semi-structured interview questions were applied to identified classroom teachers. The findings show that most teachers use various affective characteristics in addition to cognitive traits when identifying G&T children. Positive affective characteristics mentioned by teachers include "*highly motivated*" and "*having a healthy and high self-concept*," while negative affective characteristics such as "*being non-conformist*," "*not*

respecting others' opinions," and "*showing weaknesses in social skills*" were also used by teachers to describe these children. (pp.279-281) This analysis underscores the multifaceted nature of giftedness and talent as perceived by teachers. They recognised that G&T children exhibit not only strong cognitive characteristics but also a spectrum of affective characteristics, both positive and negative.

Reference 1 reinforces the multifaceted nature of giftedness and talent as perceived by teachers. This research used open-ended questionnaires to explore the views of primary and secondary educators on G&T children. Interestingly, Reference 1 findings build upon the categories identified by Reference 7. While cognitive abilities like "*thinks at a high level*" and "*has a strong memory*" were mentioned, they were not the most prominent characteristics. Instead, teachers overwhelmingly listed affective traits. The most frequently mentioned characteristics included "*curiosity*, " "*creativity*," "*quick learning*," and "*being unconventional*." (p.40) This aligns with the "*Having Different Characteristics*" category identified in Reference 7. Furthermore, Reference 1 shed light on the potential challenges faced by G&T children. The sixth most common response was the negative affective characteristic of "*Experiences social adjustment problems*."(p.40)

Reference 3 employed the "Scale of Behavioural Characteristics of Gifted and Talented Students" to gather primary school teachers' views related to G&T children. Findings suggested that teachers predominantly associated giftedness and talent with cognitive abilities. Specifically, teachers highlighted characteristics as "*a propensity for solving complex mathematical problems*", "*a curiosity-driven inquiry approach*", and "*strong observational skills*" as indicative of G&T children. (pp.182-183)

Reference 4 asked classroom teachers, "In your professional career, have you ever had a student you believed to be gifted? What characteristics led you to identify these students?" Almost all the teachers reported having previously taught a G&T child. They identified the following criteria for recognising giftedness and talent:

> *Curiosity.* (p.22)
>
> *Asking many questions and showing interest in lessons.* (p.22)
>
> *Displaying mature behaviour in relationships with peer.* (p.22)

Interpreting information and applying it to different situations. (p.22)

Discussing the details of problems and trying to derive meaning. (p.22)

Designing projects. (p.22)

Completing assignments on time and in an organised manner. (p.22)

These responses suggest teachers primarily associated giftedness and talent with characteristics that might contribute to academic success (curiosity, critical thinking, etc.) Interestingly, the responses also linked giftedness and talent with positive affective traits (maturity, initiative) and did not mention negative characteristics.

Reference 9 is a qualitative study exploring the views of 16 classroom teachers having G&T children in their class regarding SAC, the teachers were asked, "What are the main characteristics observed by classroom teachers in their gifted students?" Most teachers participating in the study highlighted cognitive characteristics, such as "*rapid learning*, " to describe the attributes of these children. However, only 3 teachers mentioned both positive and negative affective characteristics, such as "*difficulties in peer relationships*" and "*calmness*." (p.7) Some of the teachers' responses to this question are as follows:

> *The academic achievements of my gifted students are very high, and their visual and mental perceptions are very strong.* (p.8)
>
> *My students respond to questions very quickly, at a level very different from their peers. Their ability to interpret subjects from different perspectives is among their outstanding characteristics. One of my students was very calm, had different peer relationships, and found it difficult to make friends. I saw a light in that student. He took the exam and was accepted into the SAC.* (p.8)

As seen in the examples above, while the teachers primarily focused on cognitive abilities like rapid learning, some mentioned both positive and negative emotional traits. This suggests the multifaceted nature of giftedness and talent as perceived by the teachers participating in this research.

In contrast, in the quantitative study named as Reference 10, aimed at determining 358 classroom teachers' views and education needs of G&T children, the "Scale for Determining Perceptions, Opinions, and Educational Needs of Individuals with Special Ability" was applied to participating teachers. The results suggested that the most common responses were "they

learn very quickly," "they have original interests of their own," and "they are very curious." (p.167) This study revealed that most teachers prioritised cognitive characteristics over affective ones, whether positive or negative. For instance, they paid less attention to traits like "very sensitive and easily hurt" or "very sociable." (pp.166-167)

Studies reveal a rich understanding of how teachers view G&T children. There is a common thread: teachers recognise both intellectual and emotional traits, though the weight given to each can vary: Teachers often highlight G&T students' cognitive strengths. These include rapid learning, excellent memory, advanced thinking, and strong problem-solving skills. For example, Reference 7 found "*possessing talent/ability/skill*" as the most frequently mentioned category, with an emphasis on "*grasping concepts quickly*. " Similarly, other studies reviewed such as Reference 3 and Reference 9, pointed to a focus on cognitive abilities over affective traits.

While cognitive abilities receive more attention, teachers do acknowledge affective traits, both positive and negative. Studies show frequent mentions of positive traits like strong communication skills. However, negative aspects like antisocial behaviour, hyperactivity and social adjustment issues are also noted. The findings of this research's England section exhibit two key areas of alignment with the findings presented above. Teachers in both countries predominantly focus on the cognitive characteristics of G&T students (for more detailed information revisit the '6.2.6 Discussion' section). While cognitive strengths take centre stage, teachers in both England and Türkiye acknowledged that G&T children exhibit both positive and negative affective traits.

Calls for more precise terminology

Under this theme, during interviews with teachers in England regarding the terminology they use to describe G&T children and how they conceptualised these terms, two subthemes emerged: 'advantage' and 'disadvantage'. Teachers discussed how the terms they use for these

children might bring both benefits and drawbacks. By acknowledging both potential advantages and disadvantages, a shared aspiration emerged for more precise language to accurately convey concepts to refer to G&T children.

On the other hand, I have not encountered a study in Türkiye that explored teachers' views related to the terms used to G&T children, their potential limitations, or adequacy, or the positive or negative impacts these terms might have on children. This includes not just primary school teachers but other groups of teachers as well. As I mentioned earlier, the current national definition in Türkiye is comprehensive, covering both academic and non-academic areas, and includes traits such as leadership and creativity (MoNE, 2021a). Considering that the national definition has evolved over time into its current comprehensive form, the absence of research on this topic may be attributed to Türkiye's centralised gifted education system, which mandates all teachers and schools to adhere to national definition, identification systems, and specific provisions for these children.

Developmental aspect of definition

While reviewed research in Türkiye has not directly addressed the nature-versus-nurture debate for giftedness and talent, in Reference 5, a survey was conducted to assess teachers' understanding of G&T characteristics. In this survey, most teachers disagreed with the statement, "*gifted children have a different developmental level from birth*." (p.35) This suggests that many teachers view giftedness and talent as not solely innate. This, in turn, implies an acknowledgement of the crucial role of environment and educational provisions in nurturing and developing these abilities. Such a perspective aligns with a developmental approach to giftedness and talent, which emphasises creating supportive environments where G&T children can flourish. This approach resonates with broader educational frameworks advocated by Gagné (1995) and Feldman (2003), which prioritise fostering potential through appropriate learning environments.

Reference 11 contains findings that support the above viewpoint. This involved 28 classroom teachers to address the competencies required for supporting G&T children. Most teachers emphasised the importance of "*promoting collaboration among family, teachers, school, and counselling department*. " (p.905) This suggests that these teachers perceive giftedness and talent as developmental processes rather than fixed traits. However, Reference 5 found that most teachers in that study believed that "*superior mental abilities are persistent*." (p.36) This discrepancy suggests that the classroom teachers in the latter study held a view of giftedness and talented as a fixed trait, contradicting the findings of Reference 5 and 11.

When comparing these findings with the corresponding section on England, a common thread emerges teachers in both countries generally regarded giftedness and talent as a developmental process. Although the England section includes teachers' views on how contextual factors like school, family, and environment might influence this process, the reviewed studies here did not provide data that allows for a similar comparison or conclusion (for further insight revisit the '6.2.6 Discussion' section)

7.2.1 Discussion

This section explores how primary school teachers in Türkiye conceptualise giftedness and talent, utilising secondary data analysis from various studies conducted within the national context. The analysis highlights insights into the teachers' view and practices concerning gifted education, revealing both alignments and discrepancies with the national policy and definitions.

The examination of secondary data reveals a mixed understanding of the term 'gifted and talented' among primary school teachers in Türkiye. The national definition provided by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE, 2021a) is comprehensive, covering both academic and non-academic domains, including traits such as creativity, art, and leadership capacity. However, while reviewed studies (Reference 1;5;6;7) are more in line with the national definition, as the teachers' definitions encompass both academic and non-academic areas,

Reference 2,3 and 4 suggested that classroom teachers often emphasised cognitive characteristics over non-academic ones when defining giftedness and talent.

These findings suggest a potential gap between the national definition and teachers' conceptualisation of the term 'giftedness and talent,' emphasising that even if there is a national definition, the concept of 'giftedness and talent' is socially constructed and can vary from teacher to teacher, even within the same education system having a national definition (Sternberg, 2018). The findings here can be further examined through the lens of policy enactment theory. This theory suggests that policies do not simply translate into practice; instead, teachers interpret and adapt them based on their own understandings and experiences (Maguire, Braun and Ball, 2015)

Studies reveal a rich understanding of how teachers view G&T children, emphasising both intellectual and emotional traits. However, the weight given to each can vary. A common thread is that teachers recognise G&T students' cognitive strengths, often highlighting their rapid learning, excellent memory, advanced thinking, and strong problem-solving skills. This multifaceted recognition underscores the complexity of giftedness and talent as perceived by educators. The emphasis on cognitive abilities by teachers could be attributed to their close link to academic achievement, which is strongly connected to cognitive abilities (Kuncel *et al*., 2004). While cognitive characteristics dominate, affective traits are not overlooked. Teachers also acknowledge positive affective characteristics such as curiosity, creativity, and strong communication skills. Another significant finding from the reviewed studies is that teachers predominantly emphasised positive characteristics when defining G&T children. Notably, Reference 7 stands out as the only one to explicitly mention negative traits such as antisocial behaviour and hyperactivity. These patterns suggest that, overall, teachers in Türkiye more frequently associate G&T children with positive cognitive and affective attributes rather than negative ones. Traits like curiosity, creativity, strong communication skills, and exceptional cognitive abilities are commonly highlighted in their descriptions. This positive framing aligns with broader educational perspectives where 'giftedness and talent' are often associated with strengths and exceptional abilities (Moon and Brighton, 2008).

When analysing the study on whether giftedness and talent are primarily determined by nature or nurture, most teachers appear to view giftedness and talent as developmental processes influenced by environmental factors. This perspective is evident in Reference 5, where most

teachers disagreed with the statement that gifted children have a different developmental level from birth, suggesting a belief that giftedness and talent is not solely innate. This aligns with educational frameworks like those proposed by Gagné (1995) and Feldman (2003), which emphasise nurturing potential through supportive environments. Reference 11 further supports this view by highlighting the importance teachers place on promoting collaboration among family, teachers, school, and the counselling department, indicating a holistic approach to developing giftedness. However, there are some discrepancies within the findings from Türkiye. For instance, Reference 5 also found that a majority of teachers believed superior mental abilities are persistent, suggesting a view of giftedness as a fixed trait. This contradiction indicates variability in teachers' beliefs about the nature of giftedness, suggesting that while some teachers lean towards a developmental perspective, others may hold a more innate view.

This perspective aligns with the wider literature suggesting that being gifted and talented is not a fixed trait. While individuals may possess innate potential, their talents necessitate nurturing environments, appropriate educational interventions, and supportive contexts to thrive and achieve full development. This understanding underscores the dynamic nature of giftedness and talent, emphasising the critical role of external factors in facilitating optimal growth and achievement among gifted and talented individuals (Gagné, 1995; Feldman, 2003; Subotnik *et al*., 2011).

The final point I will discuss here is the terminology used by teachers when referring to G&T children in Türkiye. In contrast to the research conducted in England, where teachers expressed a desire for more precise terminology to describe G&T children (for further insight revisit the '6.2.6 Discussion' section), Türkiye lacks similar studies addressing this issue. This absence of research can be attributed to Türkiye's centralised gifted education system, which adheres strictly to national definitions and identification procedures (for further insight revisit the 'Gifted Education in Türkiye-1990 onwards' section). The existence of a national definition for G&T children may potentially reduce the perceived need for research on terminology.

7.3 Challenges faced by teachers in implementing Gifted Education

Policy oriented general challenge in Gifted Education

Türkiye has a legally mandated system for educating G&T children, based on a national definition. In this regard, students identified as gifted and talented receive their core education in inclusive schools but also attend SAC as supplementary enrichment. Additionally, they may access RR and benefit from grade-skipping policies (for more detailed information revisit 'Gifted Education in Türkiye-1990 onwards' section).

This section explores the challenges faced by primary school teachers in Türkiye when educating G&T children within inclusive classrooms. This analysis also considers the challenges primary school teachers encounter relate to established national provisions for gifted education, such as RR, SAC, and grade skipping.

In this context, the first study I will analyse under this theme is Reference 12, which aims to evaluate teachers' views on the education of G&T children based on different variables such as expertise, experience, age, and type of school. The study included 92 teachers from private and public primary schools, with educators from various disciplines participating. The opinions of these teachers regarding gifted education were presented separately based on the type of school they worked in and their areas of expertise. The "Opinion about Gifted and Their Education" scale was administered to the participating teachers. The results showed that classroom teachers working in public primary schools were undecided about the item "*opposition to services for gifted students*" and exhibited a negative attitude towards the item "*creating special ability classes*." (p.46)

Based on the findings, most primary school teachers who participated in this research expressed support for inclusive education. This suggests a preference for educating G&T children alongside their peers with diverse developmental levels within heterogeneous classrooms.

Similarly, in Reference 13, which also employed the "Opinion about Gifted and Their Education" scale to explore classroom teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards gifted education, the findings revealed that teachers were undecided on "*opposition to services for gifted Students*" and "*creating special ability classes*." (p.13) 222 primary school teachers participated in this research, which suggests that teachers did not have negative opinions about the current gifted education system in Türkiye, which supports G&T children through provisions such as RR and SAC while they receive education in inclusive schools alongside their peers.

Reference 14 aimed to determine the attitudes and opinions of 220 classroom teachers about the education of G&T children. Both private school teachers and public-school teachers participated, and the data from these groups were evaluated separately. The "Attitude Scale towards Gifted Education" was applied to the teachers. The findings suggest that there was no significant difference between the attitudes of teachers working in private schools and those working in public schools on the two subdimensions of the scale mentioned below. The study observed that classroom teachers showed a positive attitude towards the complementary provisions provided in the current system under the "*need and support*" subdimension. However, they were ambivalent regarding the "*ability grouping*" subdimension (p.249). In line with previous research, this study also suggests that teachers exhibit a supportive attitude towards the current gifted education system in Türkiye.

While previous research has often indicated teacher support for educating G&T children alongside their peers in inclusive settings without any opposition towards existence of provision such as SAC and RR, the studies I will now present offer a distinct perspective on education of G&T children. The first study I will discuss in this regard is Reference 15, which aimed to evaluate and compare the self-efficacy and attitudes of 386 classroom teachers working in state primary with gifted students and those without gifted students regarding the gifted education. The teachers participating in this study were administered the "Teacher Attitudes Towards Giftedness and Gifted Education Scale." Most of the teachers participating

in this study agreed with the statement, "*the best way to meet the educational needs of gifted students is to place them in special classes*." (p.76)

Reference 16 is a quantitative study aimed at revealing the attitudes and self-efficacy levels of classroom teachers regarding the education of G&T children. The study included 464 teachers working in both private and state primary schools, with findings presented separately based on the type of school. The participating teachers were administered the "Attitude Scale Towards the Education of Gifted Students." The study found that teachers highly agreed with the statement, "*the best way to meet the educational needs of gifted students is to place them in special classes.*" (p.31)

In the two studies mentioned above (Reference, 15; 16), rather than focusing on teachers' views about inclusive education, the findings revealed that teachers believe the best approach for educating G&T children is to place them in special classes. While this preference does not necessarily indicate opposition to inclusive education, it suggests a potential tension between educating G&T children in heterogenous classrooms and teachers' perceived needs for G&T children. Reference 2 might address the gap identified in previous studies by exploring teachers' perspectives on educating students with varying developmental levels within inclusive classrooms and their views on placing these students in separate classes as the best approach.

In Reference 2, participating teachers were asked, "How should the education of gifted children be according to primary school teachers?" The responses were categorised into four subthemes: "*with regard to inclusive education*," "*with regard to separated education*," "*with regard to the quality of the educators*," and "*with regard to the scope of education programmes*." (p.1369) A significant majority of the teachers emphasised the importance of inclusive education for G&T children. However, most teachers working in state primary schools expressed the view that the best education system for these children is a separated education system, where they receive instruction from experts alongside peers of similar ability levels. Some of the opinions from state primary school teachers were as follows:

> *They should receive education according to their talents identified at an early age from expert teachers in classrooms dedicated solely to gifted children. I believe that their talents are dulled and wasted when they receive the same education as typically*

> *developing children. I am of the opinion that these children become bored with learning in this manner.* (p.1374)
>
> *They should receive education in classrooms or schools specifically for gifted children. There should be a school for gifted children in every city, as such children cannot receive the required education in crowded classrooms.* (p.1374)

As it can be seen above, while teachers support inclusive education, they also highlight the challenges of educating G&T children alongside students of different readiness levels. Consequently, they argue that educating G&T children alongside peers of similar developmental levels within separate settings is considered the best approach.

In Reference 11, teachers also discussed the challenges of educating G&T children in inclusive classrooms. They were asked to explain their views on the difficulties encountered during the education process of G&T children in state primary schools. The most frequently coded responses included "*getting bored in class*," "*constantly questioning everything*," and "*having an 'I already know this' attitude*." (p.906) In this context, some teachers' responses in detail are as follows:

> *Especially when introducing a new topic in class, the 'I already know this' attitude of my gifted and talented students can disrupt motivation in the class. Other students may feel left out thinking 'they know it, but we do not,' or when gifted and talented students answer every question about the new topic, it can make others feel inadequate. Therefore, balancing the process in the classroom becomes quite challenging.* (p. 906)
>
> *The most common challenge I encounter in educating my gifted and talented student is them finishing assignments early and getting bored in class. Their ability to complete activities quickly can sometimes be problematic, as being academically ahead of the class, finishing almost a test book or several reading books every night can lead to them feeling bored, waiting for others.* (p.907)

While Reference 11 did not explicitly examine teachers' views on educating all children in the same class regardless of ability or disability, the study provides insights into the challenges teachers face when working with G&T children in inclusive primary classrooms. Teachers frequently reported that G&T children can experience boredom, exhibit constant questioning, and possess an "I already know this" attitude, which can disrupt classroom dynamics. As illustrated by the provided excerpts, teachers highlighted the difficulties in balancing the needs of G&T students with those of their peers. For instance, the rapid pace of G&T learners can lead to disengagement among classmates and create a challenging classroom environment. These findings suggest that inclusive education, while aiming to benefit all students, can

present practical challenges for teachers, particularly in addressing the diverse needs of G&T children within a heterogeneous classroom context.

Reference 17 used a mixed methods approach to examine the practices that 177 classroom teachers use in the education of G&T children; the difficulties in balancing the needs of G&T students with those of their peers were apparent. The study suggested that even teachers who were aware of various pedagogical practices to educate G&T children in heterogeneous classrooms expressed that it is not always possible due to various reasons:

> *As a classroom teacher, we have to do so many unnecessary tasks throughout the day that there is no time left for the tasks we really need to do.* (p.79)
>
> *Creative activities, extra assignments, which one should I allocate time to? There is just not enough time! I have many students. My workload is so heavy, how can I manage?* (p.79)

In conclusion, while the reviewed studies do not indicate any opposition to the current gifted education system, they (References, 2;12;13;14) reveal that teachers generally have positive attitudes towards inclusive education. However, the findings suggest that due to the various challenges of educating G&T children alongside peers of differing developmental levels, teachers' preference for educating these children in separate classes with other G&T students emerges as a prominent viewpoint. The findings here, when compared to the relevant section of the research in England, show similarities. In both countries, teachers hold positive attitudes towards the inclusive approach to educating G&T children in heterogeneous classrooms. However, in Türkiye, teachers also favour placing these children in separate classes with other G&T students, while in England, teachers tend to avoid classroom segregation (for further insight revisit '6.3.6 Discussion' section)

Undermined support for G&T Children

In the 'Policy-oriented general challenges in Gifted Education ' theme, it was noted that the reviewed studies indicate teachers do not exhibit a negative attitude towards established provisions like SAC and RR or towards inclusive education. However, it was pointed out that due to the various challenges of meeting these children's needs in regular classroom settings, there is a tendency to favour separate classes for G&T students. Reference 18 supports this observation but also includes findings that suggest these children are often neglected in classrooms, which is a quantitative study that aimed to determine 20 classroom teachers' attitudes towards G&T children and their education. In this study, the "Opinion about Gifted and Their Education" was administered to the participating teachers. The study found that most of the teachers disagreed with the statement, "*we are responsible for providing special support to students with learning difficulties rather than gifted and talented students*." Additionally, they disagreed with the statement, "*normal children are the main resource of our society, therefore they should be our primary focus of attention*." At the same time, most teachers indicated that "*The special educational needs of gifted students in our schools are frequently neglected.*" (pp. 68-76) Teachers appear not have a negative attitude towards the education of these children in inclusive classrooms. However, they stated that the schools they work in are inadequate in meeting the educational needs of G&T children and that their needs are being overlooked.

Reference 19 qualitative study investigated classroom teachers' views about the education of G&T children in regular classrooms. The study participants were 10 teachers who had gifted students in their classrooms. These teachers were asked semi-structured interview questions, one of which was: "Do you think that the individual, social, and academic needs of students attending SAC are met in regular classrooms?" Most of the teachers in the study believed that the individual, social, and academic needs of G&T children were not being met in regular classrooms. Some of the teachers' views are as follows:

> *I think that the individual, academic, and social needs of gifted children are not satisfied in regular classrooms because the Ministry of National Education programme is common for students of all cognitive levels. I have a gifted child in my classroom. Unfortunately, we are trying to teach in accordance with a common curriculum. This*

student is sometimes bored in the classroom, and I can realise that some subjects are easy for him. (p.92)

When we think about the level of National Education schools, the gifts of many students are wasted in the classroom. They are bored in the classroom because of the easy instruction. They are even alienated from school. However, since the levels of students in private schools are already above a specific level, maybe the students can find a competitive environment for themselves. (p.92)

Classrooms do not meet the needs of these students. They need to be educated individually in SAC. They have problems when they are in traditional classroom environments; as a result, it becomes a problem for them. We cannot deal with them individually. Thus, we cannot contribute to their academic developments. There is no supplementary practice for them in regular classrooms in terms of their social developments. We can contribute to interaction with each other or only being with their peers. (p.92)

This study highlights a significant issue in the education system: the one-size-fits-all approach in regular classrooms often fails to meet the needs of G&T children, leading to boredom and alienation.

In Reference 15, the "Teacher Attitudes Towards Giftedness and Gifted Education Scale" was administered to teachers. Out of the 386 teachers who participated in this study, only 46 agreed with the statement, "*our schools are already sufficient in meeting the special educational needs of gifted students*." In contrast, most teachers agreed with the statements, "*the special educational needs of gifted students are often neglected in our schools*," and "*gifted children generally get bored in their schools because their educational needs are not adequately met*." (pp.75-76) These findings suggest that the educational needs of students attending state primary schools are often overlooked within the current education system.

The reviewed studies reveal a paradox in the approach to gifted education. Teachers overwhelmingly stated that the current system undermines their ability to effectively cater to these students within regular classrooms. Considering that these students spend most of their time in inclusive schools and that RR and Science and SAC are intended as complementary provisions (for further insight revisit 'Country-wide provision' section), there is an implicit understanding that these specialised services alone may not fully address the needs of G&T students. This paradox suggests a need for a more integrated approach that not only enhances the effectiveness of supplementary services like RR and SAC but also improves the support within regular classrooms.

When comparing the findings from the relevant section of the study in England with those presented here, despite differing approaches in the policy formulation process for G&T children, there are notable similarities. Both sets of findings indicate that, regardless of the policy differences, primary school teachers face similar challenges. These include engaging effectively with G&T students and providing appropriate levels of challenge. In both contexts, teachers have expressed concerns that the needs of these children are often overlooked in inclusive school settings (for further insight revisit '6.3.6 Discussion' section).

Policy not working in tandem with Gifted Education

Reference 20 aimed to identify the problems encountered during the integration of a resource room for G&T children in a primary school system and to examine the measures developed to address these problems. The study included a wide range of participants from various educational backgrounds, such as the headteacher, teacher working in RR, G&T children attending the RR, parents of G&T children, evaluation board members, researchers, and 26 classroom teachers. In this research, a significant majority of classroom teachers had G&T children attending the RR. One of the most striking problems was the concerns expressed by the classroom teachers during interviews about the RR programme being conducted during school hours. One teacher's opinion on this issue was:

> *It would be nice if you prepare a schedule outside of our school timetable. Because there is a disjointedness from the lessons.* (p.356)

Although there may be various reasons underlying this issue, such as a lack of collaboration between classroom teachers and resource room teachers while scheduling RR time, as well as concerns about students missing essential instruction in their core subjects while attending the resource room, it suggests that teachers find it problematic when a G&T child their class attends resource rooms during school hours. This issue emerges as a problem within the current system of gifted education in Türkiye.

Reference 21 is qualitative research conducted investigating stakeholder opinions on a RR, for G&T children, presents findings like those of the aforementioned study. Reference 21 involved a wide range of participants from various educational backgrounds, including 12 classroom teachers whose students attended the RR. Generally, the teachers expressed positive opinions about the RR programme. However, they also shared concerns about problems experienced in the process, particularly related to the implementation of the RR programme during school hours. Some of classroom teachers' views on this issue are as follows:

> *Obviously, it would be better if it were after school. Sometimes we work on new topics in the morning, and even if we try to make up for it later with the student, it is not as successful as learning in the classroom.* (p.341)
>
> *I and the parents were also concerned about the student falling behind in the lessons.* (p.341)
>
> *The absence of gifted students in class affected their class environment negatively because they cannot do entertaining activities in the classroom due to the fact that they did not want the absence students to miss.* (p.341)

The mentioned studies above (Reference, 20;21) highlight significant issues related to the integration of RR for G&T children within the primary school system in Türkiye. Similarly, both studies point to the challenges and concerns voiced by classroom teachers regarding the scheduling of RR programmes during regular school hours.

Reference 22, a qualitative investigation, explored challenges in identifying G&T children through the lens of those directly involved. The study gathered experiences from classroom teachers who nominate students, the nominated students themselves, guidance teachers, parents of G&T children, and teachers working at the SAC during the identification process.

The criteria for selecting participating classroom teachers were based on their nomination of students for SAC during the 2015-2016 academic year. These teachers were asked to respond to six open-ended questions regarding the positive and negative aspects they encountered during the process. Regarding the question posed to these teachers, "Was information provided about the process before nominating candidates?", a significant majority indicated that they were informed. (p.105) Upon examining the teachers' responses, it can be concluded that there are no apparent issues related to this aspect.

However, when teacher opinions were sought regarding the information provided in this study, nearly half of the participating classroom teachers stated that "*the information provided was insufficient*." (p.106) Some of the teachers' opinions on this matter are as follows:

> *The information was provided. I believe enough explanation was given.* (p.106)
>
> *The information provided was not sufficient, because the talents and conditions required for the nominated students were not explained. As a result, every diligent student was considered gifted and talented.* (p.106)

Given that the identification process begins with classroom teacher nominations, this discrepancy emerges as a significant issue. In addition, when teachers were asked, "What kind of problems did you experience regarding the application process?" just over half of the teachers stated that they did not experience any issues during the application process. However, other teachers reported various problems such as "*time constraints*," "*quota restrictions*," " and "*registration issues*." (p.108)

Reference 9 investigated the views of classroom teachers who have G&T children in their classes. In this study, teachers were asked to answer the question, "According to classroom teachers, what are the problems caused by G&T children receiving education at SAC?" While the majority of the participating teachers stated that it did not cause any problems, 5 out of 17 teachers mentioned that it led to various issues. The responses given by the teachers were coded into two categories: "*being tiring*" and "*student seeing themselves as superior to peers*." (p.10) Some of the teachers' opinions on this matter are as follows:

> *Going to SAC after school is very tiring. My student gets tired.* (p.10)
>
> *My student gets very tired because they attend both school and SAC.* (p.10)
> *They see themselves as different from others. A few times they have said, 'My capacity is greater than others.'* (p.10)
>
> *The SAC lessons are concentrated into one day a week and take a long time. Therefore, the student gets tired.* (p.10)
>
> *Because they are young and also go to SAC on weekends, they get a bit tired.* (p.10)

The reviewed studies highlight a potential mismatch between national policy and the practical realities of gifted education in Turkish primary schools. Both Reference 20 and Reference 21 emphasise concerns from classroom teachers regarding the scheduling of RR programmes

during regular school hours. This disrupts core curriculum instruction and creates a sense of disjointedness for G&T children.

Reference 22 pictures inconsistencies in teacher understanding of the G&T identification process. While some teachers felt adequately informed, others expressed confusion regarding the criteria for nominating students for SAC. This lack of clarity, coupled with reported time constraints, quota restrictions, and registration issues, suggests a need for a more streamlined identification where stakeholders are adequately informed about the process.

Reference 9 further illustrates the challenges faced by G&T students attending SAC after school hours. Teachers noted that students often become tired and sometimes develop a sense of superiority over their peers, which can affect their social interactions and overall well-being.

When comparing the findings of this section with the related findings in the England section of this research, it is evident that the challenges faced by teachers in Türkiye are generally within the context of existing gifted education policies and the issues encountered during their implementation. In contrast, the challenges faced by teachers in England are primarily related to general education policies, such as league tables and a strict curriculum, and their perceived negative impact on the education of G&T children (for further information review '6.3.6 Discussion' section). However, the common thread in both contexts is the impact of these policies on the inclusive classroom setting where G&T children are educated alongside their peers.

Teacher-specific challenges and opportunities

Parental involvement

Reference 8 aimed to address classroom teachers' experiences with identifying G&T children and the process of nominating them for SAC. Teachers participating in this study stressed that the process can sometimes be challenging due to the lack of necessary support from families. One teacher's view on this issue is as follows:

> *Another reason is the incorrect ideas and attitudes of parents regarding this matter. Some parents exaggerate their child's abilities, believing them to be exceptionally smart, which can sometimes be the opposite of reality. On the other hand, some parents fail to recognise their child's exceptional abilities and are disturbed by their unconventional thinking. The lack of awareness among parents can also hinder our ability to provide proper guidance. (p.283)*

A critical aspect in the identification of G&T children was highlighted in extract from Reference 8: parental awareness. Teachers acknowledge that difficulties arise if parents have an incorrect understanding of the child's ability or potential. Consequently, both overrating and underestimating a child's ability or potential can considerably complicate the process of recognising and supporting G&T children.

Based on the criteria I previously specified for conducting a purposive literature review, only reference 8 highlighted a common issue regarding teachers encountering problems due to parents' lack of awareness during the identification process. Acknowledging that teachers might face another problem related to parents in the context of their involvement in the education process, as was the case in England (for more detailed information, revisit the '6.3.6 Discussion' section), I conclude this section with the above analysis.

Resources

Reference 17 examined the issues classroom teachers face when educating G&T children. One of the problems expressed by teachers is "*economic limitations in accessing educational resources*." (p.78) Some teacher views on this issue include:

> *I asked them to buy a book for an extracurricular activity I planned. They agreed but could not buy it. I ended up buying it myself. (….) Some support for stationery, books, and notebooks would be helpful.* (p.80)

> *To provide extra education for a gifted student, we need ample resources and materials. However, there is no support available from anywhere to acquire these.* (p.80)

While this may not be the most common issue in schools participating in this study, it highlights significant material deficiencies in some schools to meet the needs of these children. This is particularly problematic for G&T children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

In contrast, Reference 19 investigated teachers' views about finding resources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the levels of students attending SAC. Most teachers in this study reported no difficulties in accessing suitable resources for G&T children. One teacher's view is as follows:

> *I did not have any problems. I requested my friends who own bookshops, and they were provided in a short time. I did not have any problems since the books found were mostly test books. There are lots of books suitable for their ages and levels.* (p.95)

These contrasting findings suggest that while some teachers struggle significantly with economic limitations and resource access, others have sufficient networks and support systems to obtain the necessary materials for their gifted students. This disparity highlights the uneven distribution of resources and support across different schools and regions.

The previous two studies explored the resources available to primary school teachers for educating G&T children in heterogeneous classrooms. However, Reference 6 takes a different approach. In this study, classroom teachers were asked for their opinions regarding regulations and practices related to the functioning of RR for G&T children. Many of the classroom

teachers participating in this study stated that the resource rooms were insufficient in terms of physical space, equipment, and materials. One of the teacher opinions shared on this topic is as follows:

> *Although the regulations seem sufficient, adequate facilities are not provided in practice. For example, in our school, not only is there an insufficient number of resource rooms, but there is also no equipment to meet the specific needs of the student due to their special circumstances.* (p. 98)

In conclusion, findings from Reference 17 and Reference 19 expose a critical challenge in gifted education: the uneven distribution of resources across schools. While some teachers, like those in Reference 19, have access to personal networks and readily available materials, others, as highlighted in Reference 17, struggle with significant economic limitations and a lack of support in acquiring essential resources. This disparity creates an uneven situation for G&T children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Furthermore, Reference 6 reinforces this concern by revealing inadequacies in some schools' designated RR for G&T children. The reported lack of physical space, equipment, and materials within these designated support structures suggests a potential disconnect between policy and practice. In a similar vein, in the relevant section of this research focused on England, teachers reported difficulties in finding suitable resources to match the developmental levels of these children. This challenge underscores the ongoing resource disparities faced by educators working with G&T students.

Time

As stressed, Reference 17 examined the issues classroom teachers face when educating G&T children. The second and third most commonly reported problems were "overcrowded *classrooms*" and "*excessive workload*." (p.78) Some teacher comments on this issue are as follows:

> *My most significant problem is the overcrowded classroom. The child is identified as gifted and attends my class, but I do not teach the gifted child alone. What about my*

> *other students? I have to teach them something too. When you teach to the general group, the gifted student gets bored. I need to prepare extra activities for this student, but I do not have the time.* (p.79)
>
> *Creative activities, extra assignments—how can I find time for any of these? There is not just one student in the class; I have many students. My workload is so heavy, how can I manage all of them?* (p.79)
>
> *As a classroom teacher, we have to do so many unnecessary tasks throughout the day that there is no time left for the tasks we really need to do.* (p.79)

The teacher quotes from Reference 17 highlight a critical issue: lack of time. Despite differentiating education being the most common approach among classroom teacher participating in this research (visit page 274), teachers face significant challenges in implementing it. Overcrowded classrooms and excessive workloads force teachers to prioritise general instruction, leaving them with limited time to create differentiated learning experiences for G&T children.

Reference 19 teachers were asked, "Can you allocate time for guiding and advising your students attending SAC apart from regular classroom hours in school guidance services?" Most teachers responded that they did not allocate such time. Some teachers cited reasons like believing the education and time spent at SAC was sufficient:

> *I do not allocate any time because I think that the education he gets and the time he spends at SAC is enough.* (p.97)

However, only 3 out of 10 teachers mentioned the lack of necessary time to support these students:

> *Unfortunately, we do not have too much time for students attending SAC. In the classroom, we have to deal with all the students and their problems. We do not have enough time to deal with all of them one by one. This time may not be enough. When they have very big problems, I make them see the school counsellor. What I can do is generally very limited.* (p.97)
>
> *These students sometimes need support. They can have communication problems. On such occasions, I deal with them in breaks. However, this is not enough since it is a limited time.* (p.97)

While some teachers believe that SAC provides adequate support, others face constraints in their ability to offer additional support due to time limitations. Although lack of time was not the most frequent reason teachers cited for not providing additional support to G&T children,

it was still identified as a concern by some. These teachers felt overwhelmed by classroom demands and limited time for individual attention.

Taken together, the analysis of Reference 17 and Reference 19 underscores significant challenges faced by teachers in supporting G&T children. Teachers report that overcrowded classrooms and heavy workloads hinder their ability to differentiate education. Despite the intention to meet the needs of G&T children in the classroom, time constraints often limit their capacity to address individual needs effectively. Another significant issue, as derived from the preceding analysis is that while some teachers believe SAC provides adequate support, others struggle with insufficient time to offer additional help, highlighting the need for improved resources and strategies to better support G&T students.

Comparing this data with that from England, it could be suggested that one of the main problems faced by teachers in both countries is shortage of time for tailoring lessons according to the children's levels. There is also another similarity pertaining to teachers' viewpoints. While some teachers in England see the use of extracurricular activities in schools to challenge students due to the limited classroom time, Reference 19 similarly views SACs, which are out-of-school provisions, as a solution to this problem.

Teacher Education

Reference 23 is a quantitative study aimed at enhancing 2160 classroom teachers' knowledge levels about G&T children and their characteristics. A significant majority of the teachers participating in the study reported having received no prior education in the field of gifted education. (p.65) Findings suggest that classroom teachers do not receive systematic education on gifted education at any stage of their professional education – including undergraduate and postgraduate studies, pre-service, and ITE.

Reference 17 examined the issues classroom teachers face when implementing methods/strategies in the education of gifted students. The most commonly reported problem was "*lack of knowledge and insufficient in-service training*." (p.78) Some of the teachers' responses regarding this issue are as follows:

> *I used to ask my gifted student more challenging questions than the others. When I saw that he stopped doing his homework, I started giving him the same assignments as the others... During group work, the other children made him do all the tasks and assignments, so in the end, I cancelled group work altogether.* (p.78)
>
> *After I started working as a teacher, I had a gifted student in my class. I was used to teaching regular children and was confused about what to do in such a situation. I wish the Ministry of Education provided training on this topic from time to time to refresh my knowledge.* (p.78)
>
> *A gifted student does not come along often, maybe once every three to five years... In my thirteenth year of teaching, I had a gifted student. I had become so routine in my teaching that I often had to push myself to give that child enough attention... I gave him different tasks, but when I saw that he started to have problems with his peers, I stopped and began treating him like everyone else.* (pp.78-79)

Based on the teachers' statements above, it can be said that teachers struggled to design engaging tasks, manage classroom dynamics, and adapt teaching methods for G&T children, indicating a clear need for specialised professional development.

As mentioned, Reference 22 is a qualitative study aimed at identifying issues based on the experiences of classroom teachers actively engaged in the process of identifying G&T children by nominating them. These teachers were asked to respond to six open-ended questions regarding the positive and negative aspects they encountered during the process. The study found that teachers faced various challenges during the nomination process. Regarding the question posed to teachers, "What kind of support do you need for more accurate nomination of students before the diagnostic process?", a significant majority of classroom teachers responded with "Teacher training" (p.110). Some of the teachers' responses were as follows:

> *To identify gifted children within the classroom, we need to know the criteria well. It would be beneficial for us if we have a clear understanding of these criteria. (p.110)*
>
> *Our teachers lack sufficient knowledge about these schools, examination systems, and assessment procedures. They are not adequately familiar with these schools. As a result, some teachers do not nominate students. These schools and assessment systems are not sufficiently introduced to parents, school administrators, and teachers. (pp.110-111)*

These responses suggest that teachers lack the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively identify gifted and talented children.

Reference 24 is a mixed-method study investigating the effectiveness of an in-service education course titled "Support Education Room Awareness Course for Gifted and Talented Students" provided by the Ministry of National Education for 34 classroom teachers. To assess the impact of the education, teachers were administered the "Gifted and Talented Achievement Test" both before and after the programme. The research found a significant difference between the teachers' pretest and post-test scores (p.22). Some of the responses from teachers to open-ended questions are as follows:

> *The training provided was very beneficial.* (p.22)
>
> *It was something I was short of.* (p.22)
>
> *It was a very useful programme.* (p.22)
>
> *I have been informed of many areas that I do not know.* (p.22)
>
> *It was very useful. I learned the information in two days, which I could not get in a year.* (p.22)

While the in-service education programme in the study was found to be beneficial for teachers in terms of increasing their awareness of G&T children, it suggests a lack of sufficient education on this topic in pre-service teacher education programmes.

Reference 15 investigated the relationship between in-service education on gifted education and teachers' nominations of students to SAC. The findings revealed a significant difference in the number of teachers who nominated students after receiving in-service education compared to those who did not. Additionally, teachers who received in-service education had higher rates of their nominated students passing the SAC entrance exam. (p.53) This research suggests that pre-service education for teachers on G&T identification is inadequate. As a result, students may be misdirected or not directed to appropriate educational opportunities.

Together, the reviewed studies show that there are significant gaps in teacher education for gifted education. For example, teachers often lack systematic education (Reference 23) and suffer from knowledge gaps as well as inadequate in-service support (Reference 17). Consequently, they have difficulty creating interesting tasks and managing classroom dynamics

for such learners. Reference 22 underscores the need for clearer criteria and better education to improve the identification process of G&T children. In contrast, Reference 24 shows that targeted in-service education programmes can effectively enhance teachers' knowledge and skills, although pre-service education remains inadequate. Also, Reference 15 confirms that nomination rates among G&T students increase with increased exposure to in-service courses while their success rate is positively influenced when trained teachers handle them, thus indicating that misdirection could be avoided if only better-trained teacher were involved during the early stages of their development. In summary, addressing both pre-service and in-service education needs is crucial for supporting G&T children effectively and closing existing educational gaps. Contrasting these findings with the data obtained in England, there are a number of similarities and differences. The first of which is that, unlike here; the teachers' education programme in England do not sufficiently concentrate on education for children who are G&T. Not only during their ITE but also throughout their professional careers teachers expressed that they were not given enough specialised support. In contrast, the analysis here shows that teachers also face challenges due to systemic gaps in teacher education and support. However, teachers in this context do not mention a lack of differentiation-based education, which might be attributed to the existence of established G&T provisions in Türkiye. This may also explain the teachers' interest in receiving education specifically focused on identification criteria.

7.3.1 Discussion

This section analysed the complexities and tensions surrounding gifted education policy in Turkish primary schools. While the national policy framework outlines a legal mandate for gifted education, incorporating inclusive education alongside supplementary provisions like RR and SAC, the reviewed studies reveal significant challenges faced by teachers in implementing this approach effectively.

The analysed studies suggest a generally positive stance among teachers towards inclusive education, with most studies reporting no opposition to the current system that emphasises

educating G&T children alongside their peers. However, a recurring theme is the tension between this inclusive approach and the perceived challenges of meeting the diverse needs of G&T children within heterogeneous classrooms. Consequently, a significant portion of teachers favour separate classes specifically designed for G&T children. This preference highlights a potential gap between policy and practice, suggesting a need for additional support mechanisms to empower teachers in effectively catering to G&T students within inclusive settings. There is a disparity in resource availability for gifted education. Some teachers face inadequate resources, while others have better access. Despite the teachers' inclusive stance on education, their support for these children receiving education in separate classes with other G&T children can be explained by the variability in resource availability from school to school. This is because teachers' reluctance towards inclusion frequently arises from insufficient resources at both the school and classroom levels (Lindner *et al*., 2023).

Another noteworthy point here is that some students from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have access to educational materials that could challenge them due to economic constraints. This situation was not an issue observed in the analysis of the English context, but a possible solution could be implementing a regulation like 'Pupil Premium Funding' found in England (Koshy, Smith, and Casey, 2018). Such a measure could help address the educational needs of G&T children from disadvantaged backgrounds by providing necessary resources in the primary schools where they spend most of their time.

Another emerging issue is that existing provisions for G&T children, such as SAC and RR programme, are not integrated into primary school education. The Minister of Education stated that the primary goal is to integrate G&T children into the mainstream education system, ensuring they are not separated from their peers in Türkiye (MoNE, 2012). However, the reviewed studies frequently mention that the educational needs of these children within the classroom are often overlooked. In addition to the challenge of addressing G&T children's educational needs in their classrooms, findings highlight difficulties with integrating RR programmes. Scheduling RR during school hours disrupts core curriculum instruction. Furthermore, while teachers generally believe that SAC is beneficial for the children, they have noted that these children often return to the classroom tired, which can affect their performance. A potential solution for the effective functioning of existing G&T provisions could involve having the RR teacher, classroom teacher, and SAC teacher collaborate and communicate

closely throughout the educational process, managing the programme according to the specific needs of each student.

In addition to the problems mentioned above, one of the biggest challenges teachers face when educating these children is the lack of content related to gifted education in ITE and in-service programmes. As previously mentioned, all teacher candidates are required to take a course that includes the topic of gifted education under the name of 'Special Education and Inclusion' in Türkiye (Tortop and Ersoy, 2015). Based on the reviewed studies, it suggests that ITE programmes in Türkiye are insufficient in equipping primary school teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively educate G&T children. This lack of knowledge particularly emerges as a problem in the identification process. This is because the process of identifying G&T children has shown discrepancies, particularly in terms of the information provided to teachers and the criteria used for nominations. Reviewed studies show that teachers were inadequately informed about the criteria for identifying G&T children, which has led to inconsistencies in nominations and a lack of clarity about the identification process. In Türkiye, teachers working in RR and SAC are required to participate in in-service education provided by the Ministry of National Education at least once a year (MoNE, 2016;22). Modifying this practice to include classroom teachers or subject leaders and informing them about gifted education and the identification process could be one of the potential solutions to this issue. Another issue that emerged during the identification process was the limited capacity in SACs. According to 2021 statistics, Türkiye has 225 SACs, with plans to increase this number to 350 by 2022 (MoNE, 2021a). Increasing the number of SACs might help solve this problem in the long term.

7.4 Teachers' provision for G&T children

Identification

The identification of G&T children is a crucial aspect of ensuring they receive the appropriate education and support to reach their full potential (Subotnik *et al*., 2021). In Türkiye, unlike in England where identification methods can vary from school to school, there is a national definition and identification system for G&T students. This ensures a consistent approach across all schools in the country (for further information revisit '4.4 Conclusion' section). Therefore, in this section, I will not analyse the variability of identification methods or teachers' practices, as these factors do not differ within the Turkish context.

Student-centred approach to provision

Differentiation for all

As previously mentioned, in Türkiye, G&T children identified through the national identification system benefit from provisions such as SAC and RR. Nonetheless, it has been observed that there are challenges in integrating these provisions into the primary school education system (for further information revisit '6.3.1. Discussion' section). In this context, I came across two studies that meet the criteria to be included in this analysis. The first study, Reference 11, explored classroom teachers' view on the measures taken to address the challenges encountered in educating G&T children. In this study, most teachers emphasised the

importance of "*considering interests, abilities, and needs*." to plan lessons. (p.907) Teachers' responses suggest that they provide differentiated education within the classroom for these students. Here are detailed examples of how teachers approach these challenges:

> *I address potential challenges by providing additional resources to my gifted students, encouraging their active participation in class, or assigning them mentorship roles with other students. Additionally, I prepare higher-level activities tailored to their interests, abilities, and desires. (p. 907)*
>
> *In addressing challenges in the education of gifted students, I implement a fluent and well-planned lesson management. I facilitate relationships and time for my gifted students to interact with peers whom I believe share similar talents and interests. I also utilise more advanced resources and questions as supplementary materials to prevent boredom in class. I incorporate various educational motivation tools to keep students engaged. Outside of class, I strive to organise different activities where students can come together. Hence, the best approach for these students is to support them with various materials without distracting the attention of other students. If the school's physical structure permits, creating a classroom centre for these students where different activities supporting them can be conducted after completing class activities is also feasible. (p.908)*

The second study, named Reference 17, examined the methods and strategies used by classroom teachers in the education of G&T children within their classrooms. The findings indicated that differentiation-based educational components such as "*utilising additional reading resources*," "*individualising education*," and "*increasing the difficulty level of activities*" were the preferred pedagogical approaches by most teachers. (p.77)

The two examples provided above highlight one of the strategies that teachers use when educating G&T children in heterogeneous classrooms: differentiation. This differentiation includes adapting content, processes, products, and the learning environment by considering students' individual readiness and levels of interest. These findings reflect key components of differentiation (Tomlinson, 2014). However, this differs from the corresponding results in the England part of this research, where differentiation was used by teachers to address the educational needs of all students. In contrast, the responses from teachers in this study did not emphasise such a broad application of differentiation (for further information revisit '6.4.6 Discussion' section). Here, differentiation is viewed by teachers as a practice specifically used for educating G&T children. This perspective may stem from the focus of the research that the teachers participated in on gifted education, which could have influenced the teachers'

responses. Therefore, the findings here cannot be directly compared with findings from studies where differentiation is used both for G&T children and other students, as the existing data does not support such a comparison.

Enrichment

In Türkiye, RR serves as an in-school form of enrichment, while SAC provides out-of-school enrichment opportunities for G&T children. These specialised provisions are designed to meet the needs of G&T learners by offering advanced and stimulating activities that extend beyond the standard curriculum (for more detailed information, revisit 'Country-wide provision' section). In contrast, findings from the relevant section of this research related to England suggest that primary school teachers support G&T children through a variety of in-school and out-of-school provisions. However, these provisions are not exclusive to G&T children but are available to all students. Additionally, it was observed that students sometimes choose their own enrichment opportunities, while in other cases, teachers guide students based on their interests and abilities (for more detailed information, revisit '6.4.6 Discussion' section). The reviewed studies for this section of the research found no alternative enrichment practices beyond RR and SAC in schools in Türkiye. This reliance on existing G&T provisions suggests that gifted education is primarily dependent on this specific provision. Furthermore, the centralised education system in Türkiye and the requirement for all schools to adhere to this system may contribute to a uniform approach within the context of these provisions.

Acceleration

Grade-skipping, a form of acceleration, is one of the provisions for G&T children in Türkiye (Official Gazette, 2014). Reference 18 aimed to determine classroom teachers' attitudes and their education. In this research, the "Opinion about Gifted and Their Education" survey was administered to teachers. In response to the statement "*Most gifted and talented students who skip grades have difficulty socially adjusting to groups older than themselves*," half of the teachers indicated that they believe students would face difficulties. While some teachers were undecided, others disagreed with the statement. (p.70) Looking at the findings of this research, it appears that teachers are uncertain about the impact of grade skipping on these children and have hesitation regarding the implementation of this provision.

Reference 17 examined the methods/strategies used by classroom teachers in the education of G&T children in their classrooms. The findings indicated that almost none of the teachers participating in this study considered "*taking credits from upper classes*" as preferred practices in the education of these children. (p.77)

Taken together, while the findings of Reference 18 show that teachers have concerns related to grade-based acceleration, Reference 17 indicates that subject-based acceleration, such as "*taking credits from upper classes*," is not favoured by teachers. Based on the reviewed studies, it can be concluded that none of the forms of acceleration reviewed in the studies are broadly endorsed by teachers. The findings in the relevant section of the research related to England also show that teachers have reservations about acceleration practices due to concerns about their potential negative impact on students.

Teacher-centric philosophy to provisions

Peer learning

Reference 11 highlights teachers' views on measures taken to address challenges encountered in the education process of G&T children. Based on the responses provided by teachers in this study, the most frequently cited approach is "*considering interests, abilities, and needs*." One of the second most common responses is "*peer mentoring*." (p.907) In this regard, here are some of the responses provided by teachers:

> *In addressing challenges encountered in the education of gifted students, I provide additional resources, encourage active participation in the classroom, and facilitate mentoring of other students. I also prepare higher-level activities based on the gifted student's interests, abilities, and desires.* (p.907)

> *In dealing with challenges in the education of gifted, students can be directed towards group work, encouraged to make presentations in topics that interest them, and supported in mentoring their peers within the classroom. Additionally, measures may include assigning additional responsibilities to gifted students who finish their work early, enabling them to demonstrate leadership among their peers.* (p.908)

Considering these responses, it can be inferred that teachers participating in the study implement mixed ability groupings and assign specific roles to G&T students, often involving mentoring and leadership responsibilities.

The findings of Reference 17 are like those of Reference 11, which examined the methods and strategies used by classroom teachers in the education of gifted students within their classrooms. The study found that the second most preferred method among teachers for educating these children was the "*grouping strategy*." (p.77) Although specific details about the application of these grouping strategies were not provided, it can be inferred that in heterogeneous classrooms, the grouping strategies likely involve ability grouping or assigning G&T children to mentoring or leadership roles within their groups. While the English section of this research also identified teachers employing a variety of ability grouping strategies, these

strategies were not as prominently highlighted as a specific pedagogical approach for G&T children.

7.4.1 Discussion

In Türkiye, the identification and provision for G&T children are characterised by a structured and centralised approach, designed to ensure consistent educational support across the country. The national identification system plays a crucial role in this uniformity, providing for recognising G&T children. (Fretwell and Wheeler, 2001; MoNE ,2015a; 2021a; 2021b; 2021c).

In this section of the analysis, where I examined primary school teachers' implementation of provisions for G&T children, I came across a limited number of studies on classroom-based practices which might be attributed to two primary factors: centralised education system and emphasis on extracurricular enrichment. Firstly, the centralised nature of the Turkish education system, with its standardised curriculum and national identification system for G&T children may have contributed to a more uniform approach to provision across schools. This standardisation could potentially overshadow the diversity of classroom practices and make it challenging to identify unique or innovative strategies employed by individual teachers. Secondly, the strong emphasis on out-of-classroom enrichment activities, such as the SAC and RR programmes, might have diverted attention away from in-class provisions for G&T children. Consequently, there may be a relative shortcoming of research focusing on the day-to-day classroom practices designed to meet the needs of these students.

Due to the potential reasons mentioned above, in the reviewed studies, I did not encounter any findings on enrichment opportunities that primary school teachers implemented within the school for the education of these children, aside from established provisions like RR and SAC. Similarly, aside from following the national identification system, I did not come across any studies on varying identification practices implemented within schools. However, it was observed that teachers employed various differentiation strategies to educate these children within the classroom. Nevertheless, there was no mention of a comprehensive application that

includes all children. Instead, it was noted that teachers customised the components of differentiation, such as content, processes, and products, to suit the level of G&T children, thereby challenging them in the classroom environment (Davis and Rimm, 1989; VanTassel-Baska and Stambaugh, 2005).

When it comes to acceleration, the reviewed studies show that despite the official recognition of grade-skipping in Türkiye, teachers exhibited a degree of hesitation toward subject-based and grade-based acceleration, potentially due to concerns about the social adjustment issues these students might face (Official Gazette, 2014). This aligns with the findings in the wider literature, where it is noted that teachers often do not endorse various forms of acceleration due to concerns such as student motivation and the level of maturity (Rambo and McCoach, 2012; Miravete, 2023).

In terms of how teachers use grouping strategies in the education of these children, the reviewed studies did not observe a negative attitude toward ability grouping. On the contrary, it emerged as a preferred practice, along with pairing these children with others for mentorship. The main purpose of this approach is observed to develop the leadership skill of G&T children. Since having leadership skills is a characteristic used to describe these children in the national definition, it can be said that this approach is also policy-driven (MoNE, 2021a).

7.5 Integrated findings

In Türkiye, gifted education is characterised by a robust and highly centralised system that relies on nationwide identification processes and supplementary services such as SAC and RR. Consequently, the specific terminology teachers use to describe G&T students has largely remained unexamined in prior research, likely reflecting the system's strict adherence to national definitions and procedures.

Despite a national definition that encompasses both non-academic and academic areas, teachers in Türkiye predominantly conceptualise the giftedness and talent through the lens of academic achievement. This strong emphasis on academic achievement also emerges in their descriptions of G&T student characteristics, with a focus on cognitive skills such as 'quick learning' and 'strong memory,' which are seen as essential for success at school (Kuncel *et al*., 2004). Only a minority of teachers mentioned affective characteristics, whether positive or negative, when describing these students. This mirrors Moon and Brighton's (2008) observation that teachers tend to associate giftedness and talent predominantly with positive traits. This discrepancy between the national definition and teachers' prevailing conceptualisation suggests a potential disconnect, which could lead to an under-identification of giftedness and talent that manifests in non-academic domains, potentially narrowing the scope of support for a diverse range of talents.

Regarding the nature vs. nurture debate, Turkish teachers demonstrated varying inclinations, yet a key finding was a stronger emphasis on environmental factors. This perspective, aligning with wider literature (Gagné, 1995; Feldman, 2003; Subotnik *et al*., 2011), views giftedness and talent as a developmental process rather than a fixed trait.

Teachers in Türkiye generally hold a positive stance towards inclusive education; however, they perceive significant challenges in meeting the diverse needs of G&T children within heterogeneous classrooms. This is largely attributed to the current system's inadequacy in effectively engaging G&T students and providing appropriate levels of challenge, often at the expense of prioritising support for other student groups. However, Turkish teachers tend to favour placing G&T students in separate classes with other gifted and talented peers. The findings also revealed that supplementary services, such as SAC and RR programmes, served as the primary means of educating G&T children, often overshadowing other classroom-based practices. The strong preference for separate grouping and specialised programmes over integrated classroom differentiation suggests a system that relies on segregation rather than truly inclusive, flexible classroom practices.

Similarly, enrichment activities beyond RR and SAC were rarely implemented within primary schools. Teachers also expressed strong reservations about acceleration practices, citing concerns about potential negative social adjustment problems for students, aligning with findings from Rambo and McCoach (2012) and Miravete (2023). This pervasive reluctance to

accelerate, while rooted in valid concerns, nonetheless poses a critical question about whether the system truly caters to the accelerated learning pace of some G&T children.

Teachers' challenges frequently arise from the current gifted education policies and the difficulties encountered in their effective implementation. For instance, the RR programme, while conducted during school hours, suffers from a lack of proper integration within the primary school system. Furthermore, teachers are often inadequately informed during the identification process, which can compromise the accuracy and equity of G&T identification. Supplementary provisions like RR or SAC, while intended to support, can be perceived as tiring by students, with some even developing a sense of superiority over their peers, indicating potential social and emotional downsides of current practices.

A common challenge encountered by teachers in Türkiye, as in other contexts (Rutigliano and Quarshie, 2021), is the limited availability of resources to adequately support G&T children. This extends beyond general classroom materials to encompass various shortages within the specialised RR settings, including insufficient physical space and equipment, revealing a significant disconnect between policy intentions and practical implementation. While some teachers try to mitigate this by leveraging personal networks, the fundamental lack of educational content suited to these children's advanced levels remains a persistent barrier.

Time constraints also critically impede teachers' ability to customise lessons, even when resources are available, a widely acknowledged issue in the literature (Smets, 2017; Roiha and Polso, 2021). Perhaps most critically, despite the mandated inclusion of G&T education in teacher education programmes in Türkiye, teachers consistently highlight shortcomings and inadequacies in both initial teacher education and professional development opportunities. This systemic inadequacy in teacher education may result in many teachers lacking the specialised pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary to effectively identify and support G&T children within the existing framework. Additionally, parents' lack of awareness during the identification process, rather than their engagement, emerged as a key issue, underscoring another area where systemic support falls short.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly summarises the main findings of this comparative research, focusing on gifted education as a component within the broader educational systems of England and Türkiye. This chapter will first present a summary of the main findings, offering a concise overview of the research's key discoveries. Following this, it will explore a discussion of the major limitations of this research, critically examining any constraints or areas for improvement. The chapter will then conclude with a conclusion section, synthesising the study's core contributions. Finally, it will outline the implications for practice and policy, providing actionable insights for educators and policymakers.

8.2 Main findings

This section provides an integrated summary of the main findings from England and Türkiye, emphasising the key commonalities and contrasts in how teachers perceive giftedness and talent, the difficulties they encounter, and the strategies they employ in supporting G&T children.

Teachers in both England and Türkiye largely align in conceptualising giftedness and talent primarily through academic achievement, even in Türkiye, where national definitions encompass broader domains of talent. Another similarity in both contexts is that teachers tend to prioritise cognitive abilities, such as quick learning and strong memory, as key characteristics of G&T children, which suggests that giftedness and talent is commonly understood through

an academic perspective, since these are accepted as indicators of academic achievement (Chuska, 1989; Clark, 2002; Manning, 2006; Davis and Rimm, 2014). However, this narrow focus in practice, despite more expansive national definitions, risks overlooking diverse forms of talent, specifically regarding non-academic areas. A further point of convergence is that, despite varied views on the nature versus nurture debate, teachers in both countries placed greater emphasis on environmental influences in shaping giftedness and talent, and they largely view these as developmental processes rather than fixed traits.

Where they differ significantly is in their terminology. In England, teachers use a wide range of terms, such as 'Gifted and Talented,' 'More Able,' 'Most Able,' 'Higher Prior Attaining,' 'High Achiever,' and 'Greater Depth,' reflecting both historical policy influences and current assessment frameworks. While these labels can support internal planning, their ambiguity in defining this group of learners often raises concerns among teachers, particularly regarding potential negative psychological effects on students. As a result, many prefer to avoid rigid labelling in practice. In Türkiye, by contrast, the terminology used to describe G&T students is largely standardised and centrally regulated. This uniformity likely contributes to the lack of research examining the specific language teachers use, as the highly structured, top-down education system and strict identification criteria limit variation in terminology.

Teachers in both England and Türkiye share another similarity: a positive attitude toward inclusive education, yet they encounter significant challenges in effectively addressing the diverse needs of G&T children within mixed-ability classrooms. Both groups report that their current education systems often fall short in providing meaningful engagement and appropriate challenges for these students.

Crucially, while both countries experience policy-oriented challenges, their sources diverge significantly. In England, teachers primarily attribute difficulties to general education policies like league tables and a strict national curriculum. These overarching systemic pressures are perceived to constrain the adaptability and responsiveness essential for effective provision for G&T students, thereby potentially marginalising this cohort. Conversely, in Türkiye, challenges are deeply embedded within the implementation of its specific gifted education policies. Issues include the lack of proper integration for RR and SAC programme within primary schools, inadequate teacher information during the identification process, and even the potential for student fatigue or a sense of superiority among those participating in

supplementary provisions. This highlights that while England struggles with general policy issues that negatively impact the education of G&T students, Türkiye grapples more with operational challenges within its specialised system, often favouring complementary services for G&T students.

Common teacher-specific challenges span both countries: a widespread shortage of resources that are well-aligned with the needs of G&T children, reflecting findings similar to those of Rutigliano and Quarshie (2021). This is not just about classroom materials; in Türkiye, it extends to insufficient physical space and equipment in specialised RR settings, revealing a stark disconnect between policy and practical support. Time constraints also present a common barrier, as teachers in both countries struggle to tailor lessons to individual needs due to demanding schedules, even though it is regarded as one of the most effective strategies for supporting the education of G&T children within inclusive settings (Olszewski-Kubilius and Thomson, 2003; Sak and Ayas, 2020). Lastly, a critical shared deficiency is the inadequacy of G&T education within Initial Teacher Education programmes and professional development opportunities, leaving many teachers lacking the necessary education related to G&T children. A notable difference here is that parental engagement was a minor challenge in England, whereas in Türkiye, the primary parental issue was a lack of awareness during the identification process, underscoring a need for better communication and support for families within the centralised Turkish system.

In terms of provision for G&T children, distinct national approaches emerge. Türkiye relies heavily on its centralised system with a consistent, nationwide identification process. Here, supplementary services like SAC and RR are the primary means of education, with less emphasis on classroom differentiation or broader in-school enrichment activities. This points to a model that largely segregates G&T provision rather than integrating it within mainstream classroom practices.

In contrast, England's identification processes are more varied, ranging from formal academic assessments to informal teacher observations, with academic performance being a key factor but no single. English schools also utilise a wider range of in-school and out-of-school enrichment activities, though student participation is often voluntary and lacks direct teacher encouragement, suggesting a missed opportunity for proactive guidance.

A striking similarity across both countries is a widespread reluctance towards acceleration. Teachers in both England and Türkiye express significant concerns about its potential negative impact on students, particularly regarding social adjustment issues, a sentiment echoed in research (Rambo and McCoach, 2012; Miravete, 2023).

Finally, grouping practices present another point of divergence. In England, there is an ongoing debate, with some teachers favouring ability grouping and others mixed ability grouping to foster collaboration. This indicates a dynamic exploration of pedagogical approaches. In Türkiye, however, grouping practices are not prominently emphasised as a specific pedagogical approach for G&T children within mainstream settings, further underscoring the reliance on separate, specialised provisions rather than integrated classroom strategies.

8.3 Limitations and recommendations for future research

One significant limitation of this research is its small-scale nature. The data was collected from only 15 participants across 11 primary schools in England, limiting the generalisability of the findings. Another limitation of this research was the diverse levels of expertise among the teachers who took part in the research. These variations arose from differences in their initial teacher education and ongoing professional development opportunities. Some educators had direct experience with policies specifically addressing gifted and talented pupils, while others also began their careers in contexts where this group remained largely invisible within policy frameworks. Such disparities likely shaped their awareness of, and involvement with, gifted education policies, which, in turn, could have influenced their responses and classroom practices.

Additionally, the research design in Türkiye relied on a purposive literature review, which, despite efforts to mitigate limitations, may have excluded relevant studies due to the use of a limited number of databases. This could have impacted the comprehensiveness of the review and, consequently, the robustness of the findings. Furthermore, the original objectives of the

included studies and the potential biases of their researchers may not align perfectly with the specific aims of this research, leading to discrepancies in the interpretation of results. Consequently, the main findings and conclusions of this research may not fully reflect the overall landscape of gifted education in each country, nor may they accurately convey the general picture in comparisons made between the two countries.

Continuing with the limitations caused by the secondary data used in this research, the number of students eligible for free school meals and the deprivation rates of the schools' locations were employed to form the cases in England. However, these criteria may not fully capture the nuances of the school contexts. Thus, the within-case and cross-case comparisons I conducted in England may not be fully generalisable to other schools with similar characteristics.

In addition to these considerations, I utilised secondary data for another purpose in this research, aiming to enhance the meaningfulness of the primary data I collected in England. By incorporating information from sources such as Ofsted reports and school websites regarding the curricula and policies implemented in those schools, I sought to gain a deeper understanding of the educational contexts. However, this reliance on secondary data also introduces limitations and potential biases that may affect the overall validity and relevance of the findings.

The other issue is that this research relied exclusively on interviews with teachers to gather their views and practices concerning gifted education, along with an analysis of previous studies conducted in this manner in this area. While these interviews and the data derived from the conducted purposive literature review provided valuable insights, they offered a somewhat narrow perspective, reflecting only the views of the teachers involved, as well as the limitations associated with using secondary data mentioned earlier.

To achieve a more comprehensive understanding of gifted education in state primary schools, future studies are required to adopt different quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This could involve conducting surveys, observations, and interviews with a broader range of participants, including students, parents, subject leaders, and teachers working in extracurricular clubs. Additionally, incorporating perspectives from educators working in RR and SAC attended by identified G&T students from the participating schools would further enrich the findings.

By integrating these diverse voices and methodologies, future studies could capture a more holistic view of gifted education, revealing the varied experiences and opinions of all stakeholders. This would enhance the overall understanding of the complexities surrounding gifted education practices, providing valuable insights into the similarities and differences between England and Türkiye, as well as transferable best practices that could inform future educational strategies.

8.4 Conclusion

This research, conducted within the policy contexts of two countries with contrasting approaches to gifted education, revealed differences between existing policies and their practical implementations. One of the countries covered by this research is England, where education policy has long been shaped by a tension between equity and excellence. This dynamic was especially clear in the support for G&T children during the *EiC* programme, which began in 1999 and ended with the decentralisation of services for this cohort in the early 2010s. As stressed, *EiC* aimed to raise standards in disadvantaged urban schools by supporting G&T children from underprivileged backgrounds. Currently, gifted education policy is once more shaped by a tension between equity and excellence, aiming to deliver an inclusive educational approach for G&T children. This dynamic reflects a shift from specifically targeting G&T children to promoting gifted education in a more egalitarian manner, even without explicitly naming this group in policy documents (Eyre and Geake, 2002; Eyre, 2009; Ainscow, 2010; Koshy, Smith and Casey, 2018).

The findings indicate that this shift has led to confusion among teachers. As one teacher who participated in this research remarked, the situation resembles a "jigsaw puzzle with mismatched pieces." In such circumstances, schools are faced with an abundance of policies without clear directives related to G&T children, which lead them to implement these policies without fully considering their potential positive or negative effects on G&T children.

Additionally, one of the issues that may arise in this context is the prioritisation of other groups over G&T children, resulting in insufficient attention to their educational needs. One observation from this context is that, while there is no clear policy specifically targeting G&T children, decisions about how, or even if, these children are supported are left to the discretion of schools and, more specifically, to the dedication and theoretical orientation of teachers. In this context, this research highlights the need for longer-term, sustained professional development and teacher education programme that not only enhance teachers' pedagogical understanding of giftedness and talent but also empower them to navigate policy ambiguities and make informed, inclusive decisions that address the needs of G&T students more systematically and equitably.

Turning to Türkiye, the country's gifted education policy is shaped by an aim to identify and support the most brilliant minds, fostering positive impacts on the nation's economy and social innovation. In this regard, G&T children are supported through various in-school and out-of-school services, such as RR and SAC, while being educated alongside their peers in mainstream schools (MoNE, 2019; Bildiren and Çitil, 2022). However, discrepancies exist between policy initiatives and practical implementation, particularly regarding the integration of these services into mainstream schooling. G&T children often struggle to balance their commitments to both mainstream education and additional programmes, leading to increased stress and potential academic burnout. A significant issue is the tendency of primary school teachers to delegate the education of these children to complementary services. My research findings suggest that the current tendency among some primary school teachers to delegate responsibility for G&T children to external services poses a risk to the broader goals of inclusive education. This not only calls into question the role of classroom teachers in providing holistic support to G&T students but also highlights a misalignment between policy and practice. In light of this, there is a clear need for more coherent and consistent expectations regarding the role of mainstream teachers in differentiating instruction and integrating G&T provision into the core curriculum.

The tendency of teachers in Türkiye to delegate responsibility for G&T education to supplementary services is clearly reflected in their classroom practices. Unlike in England, where differentiation within the classroom remains the most preferred and effective method to meet G&T students' needs, Turkish teachers tend to avoid this approach. Instead, they place heavy reliance on external programmes such as SAC and RR. Yet, as Borland (2005) warns, G&T children suffer the most when the curriculum is not differentiated. This overreliance on

supplementary services risks marginalising these students educationally, as their needs often go unmet in the mainstream classroom, where they spend the majority of their time. Given these challenges at both the policy and practical levels, there is a clear need for a more coherent approach that prioritises in-class support for G&T children.

Another issue is that the SACs serve as the primary providers of gifted education in Türkiye, yet they are limited in number, and predominantly situated in urban areas (MoNE, 2021a). While this research did not directly investigate geographical disparities, the findings indicate a broader pattern, in which classroom teachers, regardless of their location, tend to perceive supplementary services as the main avenue for G&T support. Such a perception may contribute to the systematic neglect of in-class differentiation and school-based enrichment, as evidenced in the findings of this research, particularly in areas, where access to SACs is limited.

Another issue to be addressed here relates to the formation of the cases in England around "educational and socio-economic disadvantage." The cross-case analyses were organised into three main sections in "Chapter 6: England-presentation of findings," with discussions integrated into each part. However, no striking differences among the cases were identified in this regard. However, no striking differences among the cases were identified in this regard. The absence of significant disparities suggests that the consistency in teachers' views and practices concerning G&T children can be seen as a positive reflection of England's inclusive school system and its strong emphasis on ensuring access for all in education.

The final issue I will address here relates to how teachers conceptualise the term giftedness and talent in both England and Türkiye. Findings from this research indicate that teachers in both contexts tend to define these terms predominantly in relation to academic achievement. Although a few participants also referred to non-academic areas such as creativity or leadership, the dominant interpretation remained tied to measurable academic success.

In England, where there is no national definition, Ofsted often use terms such as most able or more able to describe students who score above average in core subjects like English and Mathematics. This framing was reflected in teachers' tendency to identify gifted and talented students based on their performance in core subjects, particularly English and Mathematics. Such interpretations suggest that, in the absence of a national definition, teachers' understandings are shaped by prevailing assessment structures and the broader performative

culture of the English education system, where academic outcomes in tested subjects are heavily emphasised. This reflects one aspect of policy enactment theory, namely, that policies are not simply implemented but interpreted and reshaped by actors within specific institutional contexts (Ball, 2018; Ball and Bowe, 2020).

In contrast, Türkiye has an official national definition of giftedness and talent that encompasses both academic and non-academic domains. In this regard, national policies and SAC provisions are designed to include both academic and non-academic abilities, with identification systems and programmes reflecting this broader scope. However, findings from this research suggest that teachers' own interpretations do not always reflect the broader scope outlined in policy. In practice, many educators continue to associate giftedness and talent primarily with academic excellence, indicating a disconnect between the policy framework and its enactment in schools.

This illustrates another key insight from policy enactment theory: the existence of a policy does not guarantee its enactment in practice. As Braun *et al*., (2011) argue, how a policy is understood and enacted is influenced by the interpretations, professional values, and contextual realities of school actors. The key here is how professional values are integrated (or not) into the policy enactment process. In the context, where provisions for G&T children often begin with identification, the significant role of teacher nomination becomes particularly pertinent. Given that giftedness and talent are socially constructed concepts, formulating policy for gifted children within a top-down framework presents unique challenges as it must effectively bridge the gap between official definitions and the diverse, on-the-ground understandings of educators.

As I previously mentioned, this is not a policy of itself but rather on its impact on educational settings. In this context, based on the findings from this research, I highlighted what I consider the most significant effects of each country's unique policy framework on teachers' views and practices related to gifted education. To summarise, while each country's approach has its own different driving factors and their positive and negative implications, my key observation from this research is that the policy shift in England may create confusion among teachers about how to support G&T children and interpret policy documents. This confusion may extend beyond the status of these children as an invisible cohort within policy to affect educational environments, where other groups are prioritised, and their educational needs may be overlooked. Conversely, in Türkiye, where there are direct policies targeting G&T children,

challenges arise from the integration provisions for this cohort into mainstream education. The overreliance on supplementary services can lead to a neglect of the core education of these children in mainstream schools, where they spend most of their time. This situation may result in existing policy initiatives being implemented outside their intended purpose, further exacerbating the challenges faced by G&T children. Thus, while direct policies exist in Türkiye to support G&T children, the practical implementation of these policies can fall short, limiting their educational experiences and growth. Ultimately, both contexts reveal the necessity for a balanced approach that not only addresses policy directives but also actively involves teachers to enhance the educational experience for G&T students.

8.5 Implications for practice and policy

The findings of this comparative study have the potential to influence the educational policies of two countries that approach gifted education from different perspectives. Highlighting the unique contexts of each country is essential, as the findings can be evaluated distinctly within their respective policy frameworks.

Starting with England, as I previously mentioned, along with the decentralisation of services for G&T children, these students become an invisible cohort within policy documents. The findings show that this situation has caused confusion among teachers regarding the specific needs of these students and how to address them within existing policy frameworks. This issue is further exacerbated from school to school and from inspection to inspection, given the varying emphasis placed on this cohort in Ofsted reports: teachers participating in this research have noted that there is often no specific assessment on quality of provision for G&T children during inspections. The findings indicate that this lack of clarity directly influences teachers' decisions regarding which student groups to prioritise. One practical step forward would be for Ofsted to include a dedicated section on gifted education within its inspection reports. Such a section could provide clear, standardised terminology for referring to G&T students, alongside explicit criteria for evaluating how schools identify and support them. This move would not

only bring greater visibility to the needs of G&T learners but also help address the uncertainty teachers often express regarding how to meet these needs effectively. Embedding this focus within inspection frameworks could encourage schools to treat G&T provision as a priority, on par with other student groups.

Another issue regarding Ofsted is the discrepancy between recommended practices and actual implementation, as well as the limitations of what is reported. While Ofsted has recommended that schools provide in-service education for teachers to support G&T children (Ofsted, 2013; 2015) teachers participating in this research reported a significant lack of such education, even in schools that Ofsted has deemed to have effective in-service education programmes. This suggests a mismatch between Ofsted's assessments and the reality on the ground, particularly in relation to how well teachers are prepared to support G&T students through their ongoing professional education.

To bridge the gap between policy and practice, Ofsted could take a more proactive role in aligning its recommendations with the everyday realities of classroom teaching. This may involve developing clearer and more consistent guidance on effective G&T provision and refining inspection criteria to reflect the practical challenges that teachers face. At the school level, this would mean establishing internal mechanisms to monitor G&T support more closely, ensuring staff are adequately educated and that evidence-based strategies are systematically embedded into classroom practice.

Continuing from the policy context, the findings revealed a lack of specific policies targeting G&T students in most of the schools that participated in this research. While one school had a dedicated gifted education policy, the education of these students was often integrated into broader inclusive education frameworks. However, the presence of a specific gifted education policy did not necessarily correlate with higher quality teaching. Instead, the data points towards effective school leadership as a more influential factor in nurturing the potential of all learners, including those identified as gifted and talented. Emerging good practices observed in this research highlight the value of strong collaboration between classroom teachers and subject leaders, whose expertise supports the delivery of appropriate challenges to G&T children. Additionally, teachers' use of digital tools and resources appears to contribute positively by offering enrichment opportunities tailored to individual needs. Targeted in-service

education focusing on differentiation also shows promise in equipping teachers to better support G&T students.

These findings suggest that, while specific G&T policies can be beneficial, a strong school culture and effective leadership are essential for providing high-quality education to all students, including those who are gifted and talented. To further enhance the education of G&T students, it is crucial to prioritise in-service and ITE programmes. Considering the policy context in England, rather than integrating content related to gifted education into teacher education, these programmes may place greater emphasis on developing teachers' adaptive teaching—understood as a specific, contemporary application within the broader concept of differentiation—and digital literacy. This would enable practitioners to more confidently identify and access high-quality resources, adapt instruction, and create more inclusive classroom environments that effectively meet the needs of G&T learners.

Lastly, the research findings highlight the potential of extracurricular activities to provide additional educational opportunities for G&T children. All schools in this research offered a range of extracurricular activities, many of which were recognised by Ofsted for their quality and positive impact on student development. While having such initiatives is commendable, many teachers participating in this research noted that students joined these extracurricular activities voluntarily, without any guidance or encouragement from teachers.

The findings suggest that directing G&T children towards extracurricular clubs related to their talents and interests may offer additional avenues for engagement beyond the classroom. However, effective communication between classroom teachers and club leaders appears essential to ensure any learning in these settings complements, rather than duplicates, classroom provision. Where clubs focus on core subjects, there may be value in aligning their content with in-class learning, potentially through subject-based acceleration or enrichment activities tailored to deepen understanding. Given the data, this coordination could help create a more cohesive learning experience for G&T students.

When it comes to Türkiye, the data did not provide detailed information about the socioeconomic backgrounds of students attending Science and Art Centres. However, in some cases, students who were perceived to come from disadvantaged backgrounds appeared to face difficulties in accessing necessary educational resources, even after being identified and placed

in these centres. While national policies for G&T students do not seem to explicitly focus on socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, this observed challenge may signal the need for greater attention to equity of access within existing provisions. Monitoring participation trends and resource accessibility across different student groups may help inform future developments in gifted education policy and practice in Türkiye.

In a field already perceived as elitist, such a polices risks further entrenching educational inequalities. To address this concern, Türkiye might benefit from reflecting on lessons drawn from both historical and contemporary policy developments in England. One valuable lesson could be the initial stages of the EiC programme, which focused on supporting G&T students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Adopting a similarly targeted approach could help enhance current provisions while mitigating equity-related criticisms that have, in some contexts, led to the withdrawal or weakening of gifted education policies. In this regard, systematically collecting data on the socioeconomic backgrounds of students accessing G&T provisions would provide valuable insights for targeted interventions. Allocating specific quotas for students from disadvantaged backgrounds in these provisions could help guarantee equitable access. Furthermore, implementing a 'premium funding' model, like England's, could provide additional resources to support the educational needs of identified G&T students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Additionally, findings indicate that there are differences between teachers' conceptualisations of the term and the national definition, alongside a lack of information regarding the identification process. There is a need for teachers across the country to have a deeper understanding of the processes involved, from identification to provision, ensuring that they are knowledgeable and proficient in effectively supporting G&T students.

The findings highlight a notable gap in teachers' ongoing professional development related to gifted education, which appears to hinder their capacity to effectively identify and support G&T students. Given that gifted education is already included as a mandatory module within ITE programmes, there is room to strengthen this component to better prepare future teachers. Complementing this, enhancing in-service education with targeted content on gifted education is important to support current practitioners. Moreover, giving greater emphasis to differentiation, and digital literacy in teacher education, like the approach taken in England, could facilitate the development of differentiation skills among teachers and enhance the

quality of education that G&T students receive in their schools. Additionally, considering the persistent challenges in integrating gifted education within mainstream classrooms, introducing dedicated roles, such as 'gifted education coordinators', a practice previously adopted in England, could offer valuable support. These coordinators might serve as critical links between classroom teachers and supplementary services, helping to ensure that the educational needs of G&T students are more consistently and effectively addressed.

In this section, the current policy contexts of both England and Türkiye in relation to gifted education were outlined to provide a basis for comparison. Building on this foundation, the areas identified through my research findings were examined, with a focus on how they could be further developed through examples of good practice. Based on these insights, several recommendations were made for how Türkiye might enhance its existing provisions by drawing on transferable practices identified from the English context. However, it is important to note that no directly transferable policies were identified from Türkiye to England related to gifted education. This is primarily attributable to the divergent educational philosophies and disparate policy formation governing this area in both countries.

Before concluding this section, it is important to highlight that some approaches suggested for Türkiye are no longer central to current policy in England, as G&T children have increasingly become an invisible group within the English system following the decentralisation of services. However, my analysis highlights transferable elements from earlier English policies, such as provisions focused on disadvantaged gifted children, the role of gifted education coordinators, and recent approaches like the Pupil Premium funding. These elements are not direct models for replication; instead, they are proposed as adaptable components that Türkiye can contextualise to enhance its support for G&T children. This nuanced perspective is consistent with academic discourse on policy borrowing, which stresses the importance of drawing lessons from a policy's full lifecycle, including the factors that led to its discontinuation, rather than focusing solely on its current form (Dolowitz, and Marsh, 2000). By considering contextual factors unique to Türkiye's education system, these lessons may inform more effective and inclusive strategies for gifted education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: The intelligences, in Gardner's words

Linguistic intelligence is the capacity to use language, your native language, and perhaps other languages, to express what's on your mind and to understand other people. Poets really specialize in linguistic intelligence, but any kind of writer, orator, speaker, lawyer, or a person for whom language is an important stock in trade highlights linguistic intelligence.

People with a highly developed **logical-mathematical** intelligence understand the underlying principles of some kind of a causal system, the way a scientist or a logician does, or can manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations, the way a mathematician does.

Spatial intelligence refers to the ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind—the way a sailor or airplane pilot navigates the large spatial world, or the way a chess player or sculptor represents a more circumscribed spatial world. Spatial intelligence can be used in the arts or in the sciences. If you are spatially intelligent and oriented toward the arts, you are more likely to become a painter or a sculptor or an architect than, say, a musician or a writer. Similarly, certain sciences like anatomy or topology emphasize spatial intelligence.

Bodily kinesthetic intelligence is the capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body—your hand, your fingers, your arms—to solve a problem, make something, or put on some kind of a production. The most evident examples are people in athletics or the performing arts, particularly dance or acting.

Musical intelligence is the capacity to think in music, to be able to hear patterns, recognize them, remember them, and perhaps manipulate them. People who have a strong musical intelligence don't just remember music easily—they can't get it out of their minds, it's so omnipresent. Now, some people will say, "Yes, music is important, but it's a talent, not an intelligence." And I say, "Fine, let's call it a talent." But, then we have to leave the word intelligent out of all discussions of human abilities. You know, Mozart was damned smart!

Interpersonal intelligence is understanding other people. It's an ability we all need, but is at a premium if you are a teacher, clinician, salesperson, or politician. Anybody who deals with other people has to be skilled in the interpersonal sphere.

Intrapersonal intelligence refers to having an understanding of yourself, of knowing who you are, what you can do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward. We are drawn to people who have a good understanding of themselves because those people tend not to screw up. They tend to know what they can do. They tend to know what they can't do. And they tend to know where to go if they need help.

Naturalist intelligence designates the human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations). This ability was clearly of value in our evolutionary past as hunters, gatherers, and farmers; it continues to be central in such roles as botanist or chef. I also speculate that much of our consumer society exploits the naturalist intelligence, which can be mobilized in the discrimination among cars, sneakers, kinds of makeup, and the like. The kind of pattern recognition valued in certain of the sciences may also draw upon naturalist intelligence.

Reference (Checkley, 1997, p.2)

Appendix 2: Characteristics associated with giftedness and disabilities

Characteristics Associated With Giftedness	*Characteristics Associated With Learning Disabilities*
•Specific talent or interest area often unrelated to school area.	•Inordinately frustrated by school.
•Superior vocabulary.	•Deficient or extremely uneven academic skills resulting in lack of academic initiative and school-task avoidance.
•Interested in the big picture rather than small details.	•Low self-esteem often masked by inappropriate behaviors such as teasing, clowning, anger, withdrawal, apathy, or denial of problems.
•High level of problem-solving and reasoning.	•Processing deficits may cause them to respond slowly, work slowly, and appear to think slowly.
•Penetrating insights into complex issues and topics.	•Difficulty with long-term or short-term memory.
•Advanced ideas and opinions that they are uninhibited in expressing.	•Frequently stubborn and inflexible.
•Highly creative in their approach to tasks, sometimes used as a technique to compensate for their disability.	•Gross- or fine-motor difficulties exhibited by clumsiness, poor handwriting, or problems completing paper-and-pencil tasks.
•Unrelenting sense of curiosity.	•Lack organizational and study skills.
•Unusual imagination.	•Difficulty thinking linearly resulting in an inability to understand cause and effect or to follow directions.
•Advanced sense of humor that at times may appear bizarre.	•Extremely impulsive.
•Capable of setting up situations to their own advantage as a means of compensating for their disability.	•Poor social skills sometimes demonstrated by antisocial behaviors.
	•Blame others for their problems while believing their successes are due to luck.
	•Low frustration level; gives up easily on tasks and fears taking academic risks.
	•Highly distractible.

Reference (Nielsen, 2002, p.95)

Appendix 3: Gatekeeper invitation letter

GATEKEEPER INVITATION LETTER

Dear Headteacher,

My name is Suleyman Naci Kalay. I am a doctoral student at the Department of Education at Brunel University London. I am conducting a research project titled: An exploration of classroom teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices regarding gifted and talented education in selected state primary schools in England and Türkiye. The intention is to investigate classroom teachers' attitudes and knowledge related to gifted and talented education within selected state primary school in England and Türkiye.

If classroom teachers agree to take part in this study, they will be invited to participate in an online semi structured-interview session with me which will last approximately 30-40 minutes. In order to proceed with this project, I need to gain your consent as a gatekeeper to access potential participants in your school.

I will be very grateful, if you give me permission to conduct this study in your school.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Please note that your responses, identifying information, and other names mentioned would be kelp confidential and anonymous from the transcripts that will be made of the interview.

Enclosed is participant information sheet with detailed information about the research study. Please take your time to make your decision. Feel free to discuss it with your friends and family, the investigators, any of the research team members, or your health professionals. After that, if you are willing to give me permission to conduct this research in your school, please keep in touch with me by E-mail: suleyman.kalay@brunel.ac.uk and suggest a day and time that suits you. I will do my best to be available. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Your sincerely,

Suleyman Naci Kalay, Doctoral Student, Brunel University London

Appendix 4: Participant information sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Study title

An exploration of classroom teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices regarding gifted and talented education in selected state primary schools in England and Türkiye.

Invitation Paragraph

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me/us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The main objective of the research is to investigate classroom teachers' attitudes and knowledge related to gifted and talented education within selected state primary school in England and Türkiye. The results of this study will be used for research purposes, in my PhD thesis between 2021- 2024.

Why have I been invited to participate?

All classroom teachers in state primary schools located in low, average and high-income areas in London and Istanbul are invited to participate in this study.

9 state primary schools from each country will be chosen to investigate classroom teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices related gifted and talented children. In order to investigate research phenomena from different angles, 3 schools from high, 3 schools from middle and 3 schools from low-points on respective scales of 'educational and socio-economic disadvantage'

as indicated by recent national data will be chosen thus schools will be divided into three groups. One classroom teacher from each state primary school will be selected to participate in this study from England and Türkiye. In total, there will be 18 participants, nine from England and nine from Türkiye. The classroom teachers, who will participate in this research, must be employed by state primary schools. Apart from this, there are no exclusion or inclusion criteria such as age, ethnicity or gender of the participants.

You have been selected to be a participant in my study as you are a classroom teacher within this school. Your views would be vital to the proposed research.

Do I have to take part?

As participation is entirely voluntary, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet and it is asked you to sign a consent form. Both copy of participant information sheet and signed consent form will be given participant to keep. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time up until 2024 and without having to give a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be invited to participate in an online semi structured-interview session with me which will last approximately 30-40 minutes. I am interested in your views on gifted and talented education in the state primary school.

Are there any lifestyle restrictions?

There are no lifestyle restrictions for participant, who will take part in this study.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all data collection procedure will be held online to eliminate the risk of spreading virus. No face-to-face connection will happen. Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or discomfort. The potential physical and/or psychological harm or distress will be the same as any experienced in everyday life.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

While there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in this study**,** it is hoped that this work will have a beneficial effect on development of gifted and talented education policy and provision in England and Türkiye.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have any queries or wish to clarify anything about the study, in the first instance please feel free to contact with my supervisors, by E-mail: Prof. Philip Garner E-mail: philip.garner@brunel.ac.uk , Dr. Gwen Ineson, E-mail: gwen.ineson@brunel.ac.uk , or with me E-mail: suleyman.kalay@brunel.ac.uk . Complaints, on the other hand, should be directed, in the first instance, to the Chair of College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee Chair – Professor David Gallear E-mail: David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

In accordance with Brunel University London policy, all personal information will be coded and rendered anonymous. Anonymity will be ensured when reporting (i.e., schools or individuals will not be identified). All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential 10 years in a secure password protected Brunel University London server from the date of any publication which is based upon it. With your permission, anonymised data will be stored and may be used in future research – you can indicate whether or not you give permission for this by way of the Consent Form.

If during the course of the research evidence of harm or misconduct come to light, then it may be necessary to break confidentiality. We will tell you at the time if we think we need to do this, and let you know what will happen next.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recording be used?

All interviews will be conducted online, and audio and video recorded by a video conferencing tool committed to General Data Protection Regulation. Audio and video records will take approximately 30-40 minutes. Audio and Video records will be deleted as soon as possible

after they are anonymously transcribed to text. With your permission, anonymised data will be stored in a secure password protected Brunel server.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data in the study will provide the basis of my PhD thesis. The thesis will be published in 2024 in hardcopy, and electronic format which will be housed at the Brunel University London. Unless you specifically request it, you will not be identified in any report or publication.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This study is founded by Republic of Türkiye Ministry of National Education and is being organised by Suleyman Naci Kalay in conjunction with Brunel University London.

What are the indemnity arrangements?

Research ethics approval has been obtained from the relevant Research Ethics Committee at Brunel University London, which provides appropriate insurance cover for research.

Who has reviewed the study?

This application has been reviewed by Brunel University London College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Research Integrity

Brunel University London is committed to compliance with the Universities UK Research Integrity Concordat. You are entitled to expect the highest level of integrity from the researchers during the course of this research.

Contact for further information and complaints

Researcher name and details: Suleyman Naci Kalay

Suleyman.kalay@brunel.ac.uk

Supervisor name and details: Prof. Philip Garner

Philip.garner@brunel.ac.uk

Dr. Gwen Ineson,

Gwen.ineson@brunel.ac.uk

For complaints, Chair of the Research Ethics Committee:

Prof. David Gallear

David.Gallear@brunel.ac.uk.

Appendix 5: Research invitation letter

RESEARCH INVITATION LETTER

Dear Invitee,

My name is Suleyman Naci Kalay. I am a doctoral student at the Department of Education at Brunel University London. I am conducting a research project titled: An exploration of classroom teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices regarding gifted and talented education in selected state primary schools in England and Türkiye. The intention is to investigate classroom teachers' attitudes and knowledge related to gifted and talented education within selected state primary school in England and Türkiye.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be invited to participate in an online semi structured-interview session with me which will last approximately 30-40 minutes.

I will be very grateful, if you agree to participate in this study.

Participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Please note that your responses, identifying information, and other names mentioned would be kelp confidential and anonymous from the transcripts that will be made of the interview.

Enclosed is participant information sheet with detailed information about the research study. Please take your time to make your decision. Feel free to discuss it with your friends and family, the investigators, any of the research team members, or your health professionals. After that, if you are willing to participate, please keep in touch with me by E-mail: suleyman.kalay@brunel.ac.uk and suggest a day and time that suits you. I will do my best to be available. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Your sincerely

Suleyman Naci Kalay, Doctoral Student, Brunel University London

Appendix 6: Consent form

CONSENT FORM

An exploration of classroom teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practices regarding gifted and talented education in selected state primary schools in England and Türkiye.

Suleyman Naci Kalay

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR THIS STUDY TO BE CARRIED OUT BETWEEN 17/09/2022 AND 31/03/2024

The participant (or their legal representative) should complete the whole of this sheet.		
	YES	NO
Have you read the Participant Information Sheet?	☐	☐
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	☐	☐
Have you received satisfactory answers to all your questions? (via email/phone for electronic surveys)	☐	☐
Who have you spoken to about the study?		
Do you understand that you will not be referred to by name in any report concerning this study?	☐	☐
Do you understand that:		
• You are free to withdraw from this study at any time • You don't have to give any reason for withdrawing • Choosing not to participate or withdrawing will not affect your rights? • You can withdraw your data any time up to 31/03/2024	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
I agree to my interview being audio and video recorded	☐	☐
I agree to the use of non-attributable quotes when the study is written up or published	☐	☐
The procedures regarding confidentiality have been explained to me	☐	☐
I agree that my anonymised data can be stored and shared with other researchers for use in future projects.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in this study.	☐	☐

Signature of research participant:	
Print name:	Date:

Appendix 7: Semi-structured interview questions

1.What is your understanding of more able and/or talented? (How would you define it?)

2.Do you use other terms instead of the more able and/or talented?

2.1. Are there any definitional differences among these terms?

3.What do you think about the usage of these terms?

3.1. Are there any negative/positive sides of using these terms? If so, what are they?

4.What are the common characteristics of more able and/or talented?

5.What do you think are the factors (genetic, socio-economic level, effective parenting etc), that influence the development of more able and/or talented children?

6.How do you describe the early sign of being more able and/or talented at primary level?

7.As a practitioner at primary school, what is the most recognised (or established) need of more able and/or talented students within your classroom?

8.What more able and/or talented identification process is followed by the school?

8.1.Do you keep a record of these students in your school?

9.Do you inform the parents and children about the identification process and its result in your school?

10.What assessment tools are used to measure the more able and/or talented students progress?

10.1.In what way do you measure more able and/or talented student progress in your classroom?

11.What services should be provided to students who are identified as more able and/or talented at the primary level?

12.Are there any in-school or out-of-school provisions for more able and/or talented students except for the opportunities that should be provided for all students?

13.What is your perspective on the role of differentiation, enrichment and acceleration for the education of more able and/or talented in state primary school?

14.What are some of your preferred practices you use with more able and/or talented students in your classroom? Why?

15.Are there any special preparations that you make before the lesson for more able and/or talented students? (How do you feel about that?)

16. How do you describe the effective teacher of more able and/or talented student in primary level (their education background, characteristic etc)?

17. Could you please describe the role of teachers, parents and schools in the development of more able and/or talented students?

18. What challenges do you face in educating for more able and/or talented students in your classroom?

18.1. How do you overcome these challenges?

19.Do you have any problems in finding re-sources (books, materials, lesson activities) suitable for the more able and/or talented students in your classroom?

20.Can you allocate time for guiding and advising your more able and/or talented students apart from regular classroom hours in school? Do you think that this time is enough? Why?

21.What do you think is the most important problem about the education of more able and/or talented students?

22.Do you feel confident to teach more able and/or talented students in your classroom?

23. Could you please explain what kinds of expertise a practitioner needs to have in order to teach more able and/or talented students in state primary school?

24.How does your past training (course work, professional development etc) influence your classroom practices relating to more able and/or talented students?

25. What areas, strategies or ideas would you like to see covered in teacher training course related to more able and/or talented students?

26.What do you know about government policy for more able and/or talented?

27.Are there any national, LA or school policy guiding on how to cater for more able and/or talented students in your classroom?

28.How do you describe the impact of general education reform on the development of more able and/or talented policy?

29.Are there any overlapping national, LA or school policies complicating in implementing practices for the more able and/or talented students in your classroom? Why?

30.How do you feel about identifying and providing support for more able and/or talented students?

31.How do you feel about teaching more able and/or talented students with mixed abilities in state primary school?

32. Is there anything else you would like to add or share?

Appendix 8: Interview questions organised into nine distinct, colour-coded themes

Red: Conceptualisation and understanding of term

Purple: Characteristics of G&T Children

Green: Identification and assessment process

Blue: provision

Orange: Effective classroom practices

Light Grey: Challenges in educating G&T Children

White: Teacher expertise in educating G&T Children

Yellow: Educational policies and practices for G&T Children

Light Red: Inclusive education practices for G&T children

Appendix 9: Interview orientation feedback sheet

1. What is the term you most usually use to describe children with an ability or potential to develop significantly ahead of their peers in academic or non-academic areas?
RESPONSE:_____

2. Please rank-order the following characteristics commonly associated with more able and/or talented children according to your perspective, with the most relevant being assigned the highest rank and the least relevant being assigned the lowest rank. Additionally, if you have any other characteristics in mind, please add them in the provided space.

[ ] Exceptional problem-solving skills
[ ] Advanced critical thinking skills
[ ] Rapid learning ability
[ ] High creativity
[ ] Intense curiosity
[ ] Leadership skills
[ ] Task Commitment
[ ] _____
[ ] _____

3. Which method do you believe is most suitable for identifying children with an ability or potential to develop significantly ahead of their peers? (If you have another method in mind that is not listed, please specify it in option F).

A) IQ tests
B) Teacher nominations and observations
C) Portfolio assessments of student work
D) Performance-based assessments
E) Combination of the above
F) _____

4. Please rank the following interventions in meeting the needs of children with an ability or potential to develop significantly ahead of their peers in their order of importance. (If you have another method in mind that is not listed, please specify it in the blank space provided).

[ ] Adaptive teaching
[ ] Accelerated or advanced coursework
[ ] Enrichment programmes or activities
[ ] Mentorship
[ ] Grade-skipping
[ ] _____

5.Which of the following do you believe plays a more significant role in the development of children with an ability or potential?

☐ Family ☐ Teachers ☐ Schools ☐ Peers ☐ All of listed are equally important

6. Please select one challenge and one opportunity from each category below that you believe are the most significant in teaching students with differing levels of academic proficiency in a mixed ability classroom. If you have an additional challenge or opportunity in mind, please write it in the blank space provided:

Challenges:

1.Addressing individual learning needs effectively.
2.Managing classroom dynamics and maintaining student engagement.
3.Designing differentiated instruction to accommodate various proficiency levels. 4.Assessing and evaluating student progress accurately.
5.Balancing time and resources among students with diverse needs.
6. _____

Opportunities:

1.Promoting peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.
2.Encouraging a supportive and inclusive classroom environment.
3.Fostering a growth mindset and emphasizing effort over outcomes.
4.Tailoring instruction to individual strengths and interests.
5.Cultivating a deeper understanding of subject matter through varied perspectives.
6. _____

7. On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 represents " highly confident" and 10 represents "not confident at all," please indicate your level of confidence in teaching children with an ability or potential in your classroom.

[1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10]

8. As a practitioner, which of the following do you believe is the main underlying cause of the challenges you encounter when educating children with an ability or potential? (If you have an additional cause in mind, please write it in the blank space provided)

A) Lack of policy
B) Time constraints in preparing for their education
C) Lack of resources
D) Lack of content in in-service or pre-service training on children with an ability or potential
F) None of the above
G) _____

9. Do you believe that providing additional support for children with an ability or potential contradicts the principle of inclusive education? (Yes/No)

Appendix 10: Indicative transcript with Emily

Researcher:

What is your understanding of high able or greater depth children? How would you define it?

Emily:

High-ability or greater depth children are those who exhibit a rapid understanding of learning objectives, often requiring additional challenges in the classroom. They do not need as much scaffolding as their peers, picking up ideas and concepts at a faster pace. However, it's crucial to note that this definition primarily focuses on academic achievements. When considering non-academic aspects, such as involvement in supporting schemes or extracurricular activities, the correlation with academic prowess may not always be consistent. While some high-ability children excel across all areas, including sports and other extracurriculars, this is not universally true for every child. Each child is unique, and their potential may manifest differently in the classroom compared to other pursuits. It is important to recognise that the correlation between high ability in academics and other areas varies, highlighting the need for individualised approaches to cater to each child's specific strengths and interests.

Researcher:

Do you use other terms instead of high-ability or greater depth?

Emily:

Not consistently.

Researcher:

Are there any definitional differences among these terms?

Emily:

I use them interchangeably. There is no definitional difference between these two terms.

Researcher:

What do you think about the usage of these terms? Are there any negative/positive sides of using these terms? If so, what are they?

Emily:

Regarding the usage of these terms, especially in the context of assessments, it's essential to consider both positive and negative aspects. Categorising children, for example, as 'greater depth,' may lead to assumptions that they excel in all areas. However, this approach has its drawbacks as some children might slip through the cracks. There is a risk of overlooking specific areas where they still require extra help or support. Using such terms is not always beneficial because it might inadvertently limit our understanding of a child's needs. Assuming that a child who grasps concepts easily doesn't need as much support may result in neglecting certain situations where they do require assistance. In my opinion, we should seek more inclusive terms. While these terms can offer valuable insights, it is essential to approach their usage with a nuanced perspective, considering both the positive and negative implication.

Researcher:

What are the common characteristics of high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

When considering the common characteristics of high-ability or greater depth children, it is worth noting that, in many instances, they often receive support at home. While this is not a universal trait, a significant number of children identified as high-ability or greater depth seem to have a supportive environment. This support may manifest in various forms, such as academic assistance or simply being part of a nurturing and cohesive family unit. The presence of such support contributes to these children's confidence, creating a positive impact on their

performance and engagement in the classroom. It is important to acknowledge that individual circumstances vary, but this trend highlights the potential influence of a supportive home environment on the development and success of high-ability or greater depth children.

Researcher:

What do you think are the factors such as genetic, socio-economic level, effective parenting etc that influence the development of high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

I believe that genetic factors may contribute to a child's inherent ability, but it does not automatically guarantee high ability. The role of parental support is crucial in guiding a child's progress to reach their full potential. In some cases, even if a child possesses genetic predispositions, the level of support they receive can significantly influence their developmental trajectory. For instance, two children with similar genetic abilities may demonstrate different developmental outcomes if one receives adequate support while the other does not. This underscores the importance of the context and the impact of effective parenting and support on a child's overall development. Therefore, while genetic factors play a role, it's the combination of genetics and supportive parenting that often shapes the trajectory of high-ability or greater depth children.

Researcher:

How do you describe the early sign of being high-ability or greater depth children at primary level?

Emily:

Identifying early signs of high-ability or greater depth children at the primary level involves observing certain indicators. A child may exhibit these qualities by being a high achiever and demonstrating a keen understanding of the material being taught. The speed at which they grasp concepts and their ability to produce work based on that understanding are crucial factors. For instance, in activities like writing, their proficiency in incorporating recently taught elements,

such as similes, into their work is noteworthy. Moreover, it is essential to assess not only immediate comprehension but also their capacity to retain and apply knowledge over time. The early signs of high ability often include a child's ability to independently build on what they have learned without constant reminders. I think these are also common characteristic of high ability children.

Researcher:

As a practitioner at primary school, what is the most recognised or established need of high-ability or greater depth children within your classroom?

Emily:

As a practitioner at a primary school, the most recognised need for high-ability or greater depth children in my classroom is the provision of challenging and engaging work. These students often excel at a faster pace, completing their assignments swiftly. To keep them actively involved and prevent disengagement, it is crucial to offer tasks that go beyond the standard curriculum.

Researcher:

In what way do you measure high-ability or greater depth children progress in your classroom?

Emily:

To assess the progress of high-ability or greater depth children in my classroom, we primarily rely on assessment data, which is collected at the school level on a termly basis. The assessments cover various aspects, and we analyse the percentages obtained, particularly focusing on identifying children performing at greater depth, using predetermined thresholds. Additionally, standardized scores are considered as part of this evaluation. Within the classroom, progress is measured through a combination of summative and formative assessments. Formative assessments occur throughout the term and are designed to gauge understanding on an ongoing basis. This could involve quizzes, the hands-up method, or interactive activities like using whiteboards to write down and display their understanding. At

the end of the term, we conduct summative assessments to evaluate whether the students have comprehensively grasped the material covered up to that point. This comprehensive approach allows us to effectively track and measure the progress of high-ability or greater depth children in the classroom.

Researcher:

What services should be provided to students who are identified as high-ability or greater depth children at the primary level?

Emily:

When it comes to providing services for students identified as high-ability or greater depth children at the primary level, I believe there should be opportunities for enrichment. While it may not necessarily be a formal 'service,' creating projects or initiatives that allow these students to engage with material beyond their current grade level is crucial. Perhaps, establishing after-school clubs or specialized programmes can provide an avenue for these students to access more challenging work or explore topics from a higher year group. This could include activities such as participating in a science lab or similar enriching experiences. Offering such opportunities ensures that high-ability students have the chance to further develop their skills and interests in a way that aligns with their advanced abilities and fosters a stimulating learning environment for them.

Researcher:

What is your perspective on the role of differentiation, enrichment and acceleration for the education of high-ability or greater depth children in state primary school?

Emily:

Differentiation, although having both pros and cons, is a common practice. On the positive side, it allows tailoring content to individual needs, making it more accessible for students. However, there is a potential drawback, especially for those who may need extra support. The risk lies in assuming their capabilities and providing work that might limit their opportunities

to challenge themselves adequately. Enrichment activities in our school offers a valuable avenue for high-ability students. It provides them with opportunities to engage in challenging and stimulating tasks beyond the standard curriculum. This is crucial for their intellectual growth and satisfaction. It is essential to be mindful of potential isolation when implementing acceleration. While acceleration allows high-ability students to progress at a faster pace, there is a risk of isolating them from their peers. Striking the right balance is key to ensuring that these provisions effectively meet the needs of high-ability or greater depth children while considering the potential drawbacks and benefits of each approach.

Researcher:

What are some of your preferred practices you use with high-ability or greater depth children in your classroom? Why?

Emily:

My preferred practice with high-ability or greater depth children in my classroom centres around peer learning, a key educational strategy. I carefully consider this approach, particularly in subjects like math, where grouping can be effective but may not be suitable for every lesson. I'm mindful that consistent grouping might make it apparent to the rest of the class that certain tables work at different levels, potentially impacting the confidence of other students. In my classroom, I opt for a strategy where greater depth children are dispersed across various tables. This arrangement facilitates interaction among peers, allowing them to engage in discussions and offer assistance to one another. Not only does this benefit the greater depth children by providing them an opportunity to support their peers, but it also creates an inclusive environment for other students who may find it more comfortable seeking help from a classmate. This dynamic not only boosts the confidence of high-ability children as they assist their friends but also fosters a positive atmosphere where all students feel at ease seeking assistance.

Researcher:

Are there any special preparations that you make before the lesson for high-ability or greater depth children s? How do you feel about that?

Emily:

I prepare challenging work for them before the lesson to meet their needs and provide a stimulating learning experience.

Researcher:

How do you describe the effective teacher of high-ability or greater depth children in primary level?

Emily:

An effective teacher for high-ability or greater depth children at the primary level must address the challenge of keeping these students engaged. Once they sense a lack of challenge, they may lose focus, which is a situation teachers aim to avoid. To be effective, a teacher should proactively prepare challenging work beforehand, tailored to the needs of these students. Additionally, an effective teacher provides input that specifically caters to high-ability children. This could involve introducing new and different concepts towards the end of the lesson, ensuring that these students are continually stimulated. For example, if the class is learning about similes, an effective teacher might guide high-ability students to incorporate additional elements into their work, such as a noun phrase. This not only challenges them but also expands their learning beyond the standard curriculum. Furthermore, an effective teacher considers ways to integrate previous concepts into new assignments, allowing high-ability students to revisit and apply what they have learned before. Whether it's through recapping previous work or introducing novel concepts, the teacher ensures that the input is tailored to challenge and engage high-ability or greater depth children effectively.

Researcher:

Could you please describe the role of teachers, parents and schools in the development of high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

The role of both school and parents is crucial in the development of high-ability or greater depth children. However, I believe the role of parents is sometimes underestimated, yet their impact on their child's academic progress is substantial. It does not necessarily require intense daily academic involvement but rather engaging with the child, having conversations, and being present. These conversations do not have to focus on school or work exclusively since children may be tired and not always eager to discuss school matters. The key is the parental presence and involvement, which is crucial for a child's development and progress. The role of parents is indeed one of the most important factors in a child's overall growth and academic success.

Researcher:

What challenges do you face in educating for high-ability or greater depth children in your classroom? How do you overcome these challenges?

Emily:

As I mentioned, one of the challenges in educating high-ability or greater depth children is the constant need to provide them with challenging material. However, this can be challenging itself, as I also need to address the diverse needs of other students in the classroom. Balancing the requirements of high-ability students with those at different levels and ensuring each student receives appropriate attention poses a significant challenge. It becomes impractical to cater exclusively to high-ability children in every lesson due to time constraints and the need to address the varied needs of the entire class.

Researcher:

Do you have any problems in finding re-sources such as books, materials, lesson activities suitable for high-ability or greater depth children in your classroom?

Emily:

Not typically, as I usually find ready-made resources that are suitable for high-ability or greater depth children. Occasionally, I might create my own materials if I feel there is a need for something more tailored to their specific needs. However, most of the time, pre-made resources are readily available and suitable. Time constraints can be a significant challenge, making it difficult to always create custom materials, and it remains an ongoing issue.

Researcher:

Can you allocate time for guiding and advising your high-ability or greater depth children apart from regular classroom hours in school? Do you think that this time is enough? Why?

Emily:

Not always. There are times when I can allocate specific time for guiding and advising my high-ability or greater depth children, perhaps on certain days. However, it is not consistent, and there are days when it is challenging to dedicate exclusive time to that group. The availability of time for this purpose varies, and it doesn't happen consistently.

Researcher:

How does your past training such as course work, in-service training influence your classroom practices relating high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

In my PGCE, we extensively discussed both children with special educational needs (SEND) and those requiring additional challenges, particularly high-ability or greater depth children. Our training included strategies for adapting coursework to meet the needs of this group. This training has significantly influenced my classroom practices today. I am now equipped to analyse the content my students are learning and consider how I can modify assignments or adjust lesson plans to better cater to the needs of the greater depth group.

Researcher:

What areas, strategies or ideas would you like to see covered in teacher training course related to high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

I believe teacher training could be enhanced by incorporating strategies on how we can support high-ability or greater depth children not only within the school setting but also outside of it. Exploring ways to provide resources or activities that they can engage with independently, beyond the classroom, would be beneficial. Addressing how we can encourage their continued growth and learning beyond the curriculum could be an important aspect to include in teacher training courses.

Researcher:

What do you know about government policy for high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

I do not have specific information about current government policies targeting high-ability or greater depth students. I want to avoid providing incorrect information. However, I vaguely remember there being a policy around 2012. As I was quite young at that time, I don't have detailed recollections or information about any recent policies. If there have been changes or new policies since then, I might not be aware of them.

Researcher:

Are there any national, LA or school policy guiding on how to cater for high-ability or greater depth children in your classroom?

Emily:

We do not have a specific school policy exclusively dedicated to high-ability or greater depth children. Instead, our approach is more comprehensive, covering not only high-ability students but also those with special educational needs and those with average abilities. It aligns with an inclusive education policy, ensuring that all groups are considered and catered to appropriately.

Researcher:

How do you describe the impact of general education reform on the development of for high-ability or greater depth children policy?

Emily:

I do not believe there can be a policy specifically for a particular group, such as high-ability or greater depth children. Policies generally impact various student groups. The impact of education reforms on specific groups, including high-ability children, can vary, and it's essential to evaluate policies comprehensively rather than targeting one group in isolation.

Researcher:

Are there any overlapping national, LA or school policies complicating in implementing practices for the high-ability or greater depth children in your classroom? Why?

Emily:

No.

Researcher:

How do you feel about identifying and providing support for high-ability or greater depth children?

Emily:

I find it natural and essential to ensure that work is appropriately prepared for high-ability or greater depth children. Observing their long-term progress throughout the year and witnessing the positive outcomes is not only beneficial for the students but also contributes to the development of my teaching skills. It is a mutually beneficial process – helping the children and enhancing my craft as a teacher. Simultaneously addressing both aspects makes me feel a significant part of my job, and it is immensely rewarding.

Researcher:

How do you feel about teaching high-ability or greater depth children with mixed abilities in state primary school?

Emily:

Teaching high-ability or greater depth children alongside those with mixed abilities in a state primary school presents its challenges. It can be particularly demanding when focusing on the middle-ability students, as it is easy to inadvertently overlook the high-ability children. Ensuring that they are adequately challenged and not overlooked becomes crucial. Teaching in a mixed ability classroom has its complexities, but it is important to strive for a balanced approach to cater to the diverse needs of all students.