

## Parent Support for AGT pupils

- 1. Equip them to succeed** Ensure your child has everything they need to develop their skills – whether it’s a library card, internet access, a keyboard or somewhere to paint or draw away from other siblings. You don’t have to spend a fortune; second-hand books and equipment are perfectly fine. [You can also support their learning at home to expand their knowledge of subjects taught in school.](#)
- 2. Emotional support** What emotional support do gifted children need? The same as any other child. “Love without strings, praise for effort and a family structure so that they know what is expected of them and how to treat others with respect,” says psychologist [Professor Joan Freeman](#), who specialises in gifted children. “Gifted children tend to be very hard on themselves so you may need to provide an extra morale boost and offer your support if they are trying very difficult things.”
- 3. Help them be understood** “Gifted children can be misunderstood – they often learn differently, interact differently and don’t quite conform to normal behaviour,” says Julie Taplin, Deputy Chief Executive of the [National Association for Gifted Children](#). “Discuss your child’s qualities and characteristics with family members, friends, other parents, teachers and club leaders so that they can try to understand your child and what is ‘normal’ for them. It should help your child feel more accepted and at ease.”
- 4. Daydream time** Allow your child to have some unstructured time each day just to think, play and daydream. It is important for creativity and having some downtime could prevent your child becoming stressed.
- 5. Allow them to fail** “Gifted children need to be allowed to fail at things,” says Julie Taplin. “If they succeed all the time it can lead to them placing too much pressure on themselves.” Encourage them to take risks and attempt things that will be difficult both intellectually and physically (as long as they are in a safe environment), but help them to understand that failure helps them learn and develop their skills.
- 6. Get help** Your child’s abilities may quickly outstrip your own, which can be upsetting if you feel you aren’t able to help them. Reading up and researching subjects can help – but most parents only have so much time. Extra tuition can help, as can making the most of the experts on hand at places you visit such as museums.

7. **Have a range of friendships.** Gifted children can sometimes struggle to identify with children of their own age who don't have their abilities – but don't assume that this will be the case with your child. Allow them time to play with all sorts of children, and give them the opportunity to meet like-minded peers through charities such as the [NAGC](#), which organises fun and challenging activities for children and workshops and talks for their parents, and [Mensa](#), which offers a Young Mensa membership.