



OXFORD FORUM

Press Release

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CELIA GREEN SLAMS NEW SCHEME FOR 'GIFTED'

The Department for Education and Skills recently announced a scheme whereby £65 million is to be allocated to the 'gifted and talented' in state schools, meaning the top 10% of pupils. The money is to be used by schools to buy extra lessons, activities, outings, and so on.

Dr. Celia Green is a former child prodigy who is known for her critical views on the state education system. She believes the new scheme is worse than useless.

Dr Green writes:

As a former, and present, victim of the state educational system I can only say how much I deplore this latest development, and how strongly I advise the parents of the gifted, and gifted children and teenagers themselves, to shun and avoid all contact with it, as well as with state schools in general. I note that using 'credits' to allow the gifted to take more exams, and at a younger age than normal, which might be of real help, does not seem to be on the agenda.

Even making provision for extra exam-taking at an early age would be subject to the criticism that no tweaking of a system which is being paid for by the confiscation of freedom from taxpayers can be expected to be beneficial to the individual. It would be better to facilitate school-leaving at the earliest possible age. Fundamentally, the problem is that within the current educational system the victim is subject to the control of teachers, local education authorities, and government edicts, and this is not compatible with the acquisition of qualifications.

As is usual in discussions about gifted children, one has to start by rejecting fictional rationalisations which make it difficult to get to the real issues. What would be of real help would be to repeal the powers of supervision and interference of local education authorities, which appear to have come in, in their present form, in the 1945 Education Act. Local and national government has control over the way education is delivered, so that it is made impossible for gifted children and their parents to use their own judgement about what is best.

Celia Green is Director of Oxford Forum. She studied Maths and Theoretical Physics at Somerville College, Oxford, and is well known for her philosophical books including *The Human Evasion* and *Advice to Clever Children*.

Oxford Forum is a centre for the expression of dissident ideas in philosophy, psychology and politics.

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