

Teachers' work and gifted education

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This paper examines the perspectives of teachers and personnel working in a State Government primary school situated in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, four years after participating in the Bright Futures gifted professional development. Although the school proudly proclaims a tradition of scholarship and excellence within a friendly, caring and democratic ethos, the data from semi-structured interviews in a qualitative, single case case-study, shows considerable ambivalence towards gifted education programs. This has significant negative repercussions for meeting the individual educational needs of gifted students. Using a Foucaultian framework, I analyse the data showing that whilst teachers are striving to improve the learning outcomes for all students, they are caught within a complex reality, created by the often conflicting influences of educational policy, formal school rhetoric and their own personal beliefs, which in turn have been influenced by egalitarian principles detrimental to gifted education.