

# Unlocking Potential: The Hector Children Academies and Their Systematic Approach to Fostering Gifted and Talented Students

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## ABSTRACT

Since 2010, the Hector Children Academies (HCA) has been supporting highly gifted and talented elementary school children through specialized programs alongside regular education. It was established through the initiative and continuous funding of the Hector Foundation II, with strong support from the State of Baden-Württemberg in Germany and school administrations. With over 23,000 participants each year from 2,100 schools, the program offers 15 Hector Core Courses and additional STEM-focused courses. The Core Courses are developed following rigorous research standards to ensure high-quality content.

Teachers are asked to nominate gifted students by considering characteristics such as exceptional cognitive abilities, creativity, and specific interests, regardless of their background or gender. To further minimize selection biases in the nomination process, a FIPS+ study tests for alternatives which would include standardized tests.

With a systematic approach to providing research-based learning opportunities for highly gifted and talented children, HCA unlocks their potential, fosters student competence growth, and promotes talent development

## KEYWORDS:

*Specialized programs, Research standards, Highly gifted and talented children*