# Pros and Cons about IQ testing

One of the advantages of an IQ test is that it can provide unique and important information about a young child’s intellectual development that family or professionals may not have picked up on or been able to explain.

The tests can also provide important information about how a child is functioning in relation to different cognitive processes. This can help professionals to identify children’s individual areas of strength, as well as areas where they are comparatively not as strong.

Mapping this pattern of strengths and any relative weaknesses can also help in the identification of possible specific learning difficulties. For example, an IQ test may help to identify a child who is gifted, but who also has dyslexia or difficulties with visual processing (dual exceptionality).

There are also limitations to IQ tests that professionals need to be aware of. The tests provide a ‘snapshot’ of a child’s responses at the time of taking the test. For various reasons, children may not demonstrate their full potential on the test. Very young children, who are shy, or those from disadvantaged or diverse cultural or non-English speaking backgrounds, may be disadvantaged by the test. Children may be tired, unwell, anxious or uncooperative on the day they take the test.

In addition, IQ tests focus on measuring a particular range of intellectual abilities. Thus, they do not assess a child’s creative or artistic abilities, or social competence. For these reasons, care always needs to be taken in interpreting the results of an IQ assessment of young children. A child who scores highly on an IQ test can be regarded as gifted, but a child who does not score in the gifted range *may still be gifted*.

Professionals should seek permission from the family to access the report, but with permission the report can provide valuable information.