



# St Columba's School Bayswater

Grow in Faith    Seek Wisdom    Live in Peace

## Gifted and Talented Policy

### VISION STATEMENT

St Columba's Primary School aims to foster the total development of each individual, within a loving community, that is totally committed to supporting the Catholic faith, principles and ideals within the framework of the Mercy Values.

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## Vision for Gifted and Talented Education in Catholic Schools

**All students regardless of race, age or gender, by virtue of their dignity as human persons, have a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and adapted to this ability.**

***GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS NL, 1965.***  
***(Declaration on Christian Education), POPE PAUL VI***

### **RATIONALE**

St Columba's School is committed to providing a rich and challenging curriculum for all students; one that promotes and encourages each and every individual to achieve their full potential. This includes establishing a learning environment that enables spiritual, emotional, physical, intellectual, social gifts and talents to be revealed and nurtured.

The Extension program has therefore been established to ensure an appropriate and responsive learning environment is provided for those individuals recognised to be gifted and talented.

### **Definitions**

Our definition of giftedness and talent is based on Gagnes Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (2003) (See *Appendix A*)

Giftedness refers to a student's exceptional natural ability in one or more of four domains, these being: intellectual, creative, socio-affective and sensorimotor.

- Talent refers to outstanding performance in one or more fields including a wide range of academic, artistic, social, sporting or technical skills.
- Talent emerges from giftedness as a consequence of the developmental process of education, practice and training.
- While acknowledging the importance of innate ability, it is also important to recognise the significant influence of environment, personality and chance on the developmental process.

Gifted and Talented students may vary in terms of the nature and level of their abilities.

Gagnes model of gifted education distinguishes between outstanding potential (giftedness) and outstanding performance (talent). Therefore, a student can be gifted without being talented. The purpose of gifted education in schools, then, is as a catalyst turning potential into high level performance.

### **Identification and Selection**

The key purpose of identifying gifted and talented students is to provide appropriate learning opportunities that meet their individual needs. The identification of a child's gifts and talents is an **ongoing and evolving** process that occurs throughout the child's school life in order to assess and accommodate the growth and change of individual gifts and talents. Therefore, at St Columba's, identification and effective educational provision depends on a broad range of quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) identification measures.

These include...

- IQ tests (TOLA and SPM)
- Standardized tests (eg. NAPLAN)
- Student records and performance data
- Teacher observations and nominations
- Anecdotal records – Interviews (parent/child/previous teacher/community members)
- Identification checklists

Gifted and talented children who have dual exceptionality (*that is, with learning difficulties or disability*) or who are from *disadvantaged or culturally diverse populations* are often not identified using the standardised tests outlined above. For this group of students, information will be gathered using a variety of tools considered more culturally and/or linguistically appropriate.

### **Whole-school Provisions**

The provision of a challenging and extended curriculum for gifted students is the responsibility of all teachers. Teachers utilize a range of classroom strategies such as flexible grouping or curriculum differentiation in order to meet the needs of gifted students.

**I**ndividual **E**ducation **P**lans (IEP) or **C**urriculum **A**justment **P**lans (CAP) are developed and implemented for students requiring curriculum modification.

These plans are reviewed regularly in conjunction with teachers, parents and carers, counsellors, and the student.

### St Columba's Extension Program

Gifted and Talented students need time to work with like minds.

At St Columba's students from years 4-6, who have been identified as being gifted and talented, are invited to participate in the St Columba's Extension Program. Students are withdrawn from class one hour per week, where they participate in specially designed units of work. However, the provision of a challenging and extended curriculum for gifted students is the responsibility of all teachers.

At the school level, **a continuum of educational service** is made available for all students. A continuum of service would include:

- a) **Curriculum differentiation**
- b) **Acceleration**
- c) **Learning beyond the classroom.**

### **Curriculum Differentiation**

Curriculum differentiation may occur across the following variables:

- **Curriculum Content** that allows for breadth of experience; offers personalised learning opportunities related to student interests; develops complex, abstract thought; is related to future problem solving and broad social justice issues and themes; and has a cross-curricula perspective.
- **Learning Processes** that include self-directed or independent study; open ended tasks; higher research skills, critical thinking, and analysis; skills in communication, collaboration, publication and design; and reflective processes.
- **Learning Resources** that provide a range of motivating materials and opportunities for sustained learning, independent work, and transitional processes between learning experiences.
- **Learning Products** that require transformation of student learning; include real world problems and audiences; and involve interaction with and creation of multi-modal texts.
- **Learning Environment Modifications** that encourage complex and abstract thought; create an accepting and non-judgemental classroom climate; encourage open and mobile learning experiences, and provide for flexible grouping opportunities to socialise and learn with like-ability peers.

## **Acceleration Strategies and Procedures**

Current research supports acceleration as an intervention for gifted students. When nominating a student for acceleration the following factors are taken into account.

- Ability
- Aptitude
- Achievement
- Interpersonal Skills
- Development Skills
- Attitude
- Support required.

The following acceleration strategies are taken into consideration in achieving the flexibility to meet varying student needs.

- **Curriculum compacting** reducing the amount of introductory activities, drill, and practice associated with the classroom curriculum. This will enable students to skip parts of the curriculum they have already mastered and move on to more challenging content and activities.
- **Telescoping the curriculum** to allow a student exemption from the knowledge and skills already demonstrated in the classroom. Students move more rapidly than peers through content, increasing the pace of learning and eliminating repetition.
- **Partial acceleration across year levels** or content-based acceleration.
- **Year level advancement** that enables a gifted student to work with an older chronological grouping.
- **Radical acceleration** where highly or profoundly gifted students skip several year levels and/or experience several forms of acceleration.

## **Learning beyond the Classroom**

There are various solutions available to meet the diverse needs of gifted and talented students. Although this continuum begins with classroom provision, it may extend to in-school and out-of-school programs to further develop individual gifts and talents or strengthen particular student needs. The many available out-of-school programs and experiences include home-based activities and resources, community centred opportunities, weekend and holiday programs, competitions, flexible learning opportunities, and mentoring.

In planning for extended services for gifted and talented students, consideration is given to both immediate and future goals and objectives, incorporating activities within and beyond the classroom. Ideally, this plan

would be developed as a collaborative effort between teachers, families, outside providers and community members, and gifted and talented students. Student's needs are at the centre of educational decisions, ensuring a careful match between program choice and the individual. No one program will cater for the diverse needs of all gifted and talented students in a school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **School Leadership**

School Leadership Teams shall:

- establish whole school processes and structures for collaborative professional learning that support teachers to develop a deep and integrated knowledge of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment related to evidence-informed practices for gifted education.
- provide support for every teacher in the learning community to develop a collective responsibility for the education of gifted students.
- oversee planning and review of school policy and procedures for gifted and talented education.
- provide relevant documentation and information to the Catholic Education Office regarding the acceleration of gifted students in Catholic schools.

### **The Teacher**

Quality teaching underpins the provision of learning experiences appropriate to the needs of gifted and talented students. Teachers have the responsibility of selecting, implementing and evaluating a wide range of strategies that challenge all gifted learners to succeed:

Teachers should:

- Understand current terminology, definition, and theory of giftedness.
- Be able to access ongoing professional learning opportunities in relation to gifted education that provide opportunities for collaboration between teachers and networking across schools.
- Gather a range of information about their students in order to identify, plan, and review the provision of giftedness and talent.
- Consider the characteristics of special groups of students such as low income, underachieving, cultural difference and disability and the influence of these characteristics on student learning needs.
- Incorporate classroom information on the school's data base for the identification and tracking of students with gifts and talents.
- Establish and maintain effective home-school communication to inform

educational planning.

- Plan learning experiences that incorporate student-centred learning, effective inter- and intrapersonal skill development; critical and creative thinking, original research, independent study, deliberate practice, and future problem solving.
- Use a variety of data to inform and provide regular challenge in student learning;
- Adapt the classroom environment to the learning differences of gifted and talented learners including management of large and small groups and independent learning.

### **The G&T Coordinator**

The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will work with students, parents and staff to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate appropriate programs that support the learning needs of students with high intellectual potential.

The coordinator should:

- Establish a challenging program for gifted and talented students, to maximise their educational experience.
- Coordinate and teach withdrawal groups of gifted learners. (Extension Program)
- Provide feedback to students, parents and teachers through meetings.
- Assess and monitor students' progress in the program.
- Work with individual teachers to support their provision for gifted learners in the regular classroom situation.
- Take a lead role in promoting and supporting gifted and talented students.

### **RESOURCES**

Gross, M. U. M., MacLeod, B., Drummond, D., & Merrick, C. (2001). *Gifted students in primary schools: differentiating the curriculum*. Sydney: GERRIC, UNSW.

Tomlinson, C. A., (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms*. (2nd Ed.) Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

## CHANCE (C)

### NATURAL ABILITIES

GIFTS (G) = top 10 %

#### DOMAINS

##### INTELLECTUAL (GI)

General intelligence ('g' factor)  
Fluid, crystallized reasoning  
Verbal, numerical, spatial (RADEX)  
Memory: procedural, declarative

##### CREATIVE (GC)

Inventiveness (problem-solving)  
Imagination, originality (arts)  
Carroll's 'retrieval fluency'

##### SOCIAL (GS)

Perceptiveness (manipulation)  
Interacting: social ease, tact  
Influence: persuasion, eloquence,  
leadership, courting, parenting

##### PERCEPTUAL (GP)

Vision, hearing, smell, taste,  
touch, proprioception

##### MUSCULAR (GM)

Power, speed, strength,  
endurance

##### MOTOR CONTROL (GR)

Speed (reflexes), agility,  
coordination, balance

MENTAL

PHYSICAL

### ENVIRONMENTAL (E)

#### MILIEU (EM)

Physical, cultural, social, familial

#### INDIVIDUALS (EI)

Parents, family, peers, teachers, mentors

#### PROVISIONS (EP)

Enrichment: curriculum, pedagogy (pacing)  
Administrative: grouping, acceleration

### INTRAPERSONAL (I)

TRAITS

#### PHYSICAL (IF)

Appearance, handicaps, health

#### MENTAL (IP)

Temperament, personality, resilience

GOAL-  
MANAGEMENT

#### AWARENESS (IW)

Self & others; strengths & weaknesses

#### MOTIVATION (IM)

Values, needs, interests, passions

#### VOLITION (IV)

Autonomy, effort, perseverance

CATALYSTS

### DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS (D)

#### ACTIVITIES (DA)

Access  
Content  
Format

#### PROGRESS (DP)

Stages  
Pace  
Turning points

#### INVESTMENT (DI)

Time  
Money  
Energy

### COMPETENCIES

TALENTS (T) = top 10 %

#### FIELDS

##### ACADEMIC (TC)

Language(s), maths, sciences,  
humanities, vocational

##### R TECHNICAL (TT)

Transport, construction, crafts,  
manufacturing, agriculture

##### I SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (TI)

Engineering, medical, social

##### A ARTS (TA)

Creative, performing  
Applied: visual, written, spoken

##### S SOCIAL SERVICE (TP)

Health, education, community

##### E ADMINISTRATION/ SALES (TM)

Management, marketing,  
protection, inspection

##### C BUSINESS OPERATIONS (TB)

Records, financial, distribution

##### GAMES (TG)

Video & card, chess, puzzles

##### SPORTS & ATHLETICS (TS)

