

GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

Rationale

St Joseph's College recognises that by programming for "Gifted and Talented" students it is consistent with the Catholic philosophy of education. By recognising this, emphasis is placed on a firm commitment to provide an education, which encourages **all** students to strive for excellence and to develop fully their potential.

In the light of St Joseph's Mission Statement, to maximise learning and individual development, these students will be given appropriate opportunities, stimulation and experiences to develop their potential. In so doing, their learning needs will be satisfied, boredom, confusion and frustration minimised and they will realise their contribution to themselves and others.

To assist in fulfilling this, we recognise that:

- ◆ programmes must not be, "more of the same."
- ◆ extension and enrichment programmes must be supported within the regular classroom.
- ◆ **all** students, not just the gifted and talented students, should be provided with the opportunity to enrich themselves.
- ◆ there must be commitment by the **whole** school community to the needs of these students.

Desired Outcomes

This policy's desired outcomes can then be seen as:

- ◆ having respect and understanding for the values of Catholic education and its aim to develop each student to their full potential
- ◆ creating an educational environment in which gifted and talented students can express and develop their potential
- ◆ providing differential learning opportunities and strategies, in all Key Learning Areas, to allow gifted and talented students to be challenged intellectually, creatively, socially and emotionally
- ◆ providing the opportunity for students with similar ability to develop relationships, understanding, self-confidence and direction
- ◆ supporting and fostering the values of "academic" achievement, creative thinking and intellectual inquiry
- ◆ developing an increased awareness within the school of the needs and learning experiences suited to the development of all students, not only the gifted and talented
- ◆ developing teachers, professionally, in skills of recognising and catering for the needs of gifted and talented students

Definitions

Throughout this policy the terms "Gifted" and "Talented" will be used. They will be used in the following context:

"Giftedness" refers to the outstanding ability in one or more domains eg. intellectual, creative, socio-emotional, or sensorimotor, that places subjects among the upper 15 - 20% of their age peers.

"Talent" refers to outstanding performance in one or more fields within these domains eg. writing, mathematics, science and technology, sculpture, athletics, languages, that places subjects among the upper 15 - 20% of the active members of the field.

That is, talent emerges from giftedness as a consequence of the student's learning experiences.

Role Outlines and Responsibilities

Catholic Education Office

Promote the awareness and development of the needs of gifted and talented students among staff through providing:

- ◆ inservice and professional development programmes to enhance policy development therefore helping staff to meet the needs of these students.
- ◆ financial support towards such development.

Principal

Support the development of gifted and talented education within the school by:

- ◆ assisting in the developing and overseeing of school programmes.
- ◆ allowing for gifted education and talent development within the school budget.
- ◆ being responsible for deciding when any form of accelerated progression is appropriate to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of individual gifted and talented students.
- ◆ recognising the rights of those with parental responsibilities to be fully informed and participate in all decisions relating to their child's education.

Executive Staff and KLA Coordinators

- ◆ Ensure quality implementation of gifted and talented education programmes within the KLAs.
- ◆ Support the staff in meeting the needs of the gifted and talented students within the school and their faculty.
- ◆ Assist the principal with deciding when any form of accelerated progression is appropriate to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of individual gifted and talented students.

Gifted and Talented Coordinator

- ◆ Identify the needs for professional development and make recommendations to the principal.
- ◆ Assist teachers to meet the needs of these students.
- ◆ Provide for adequate resources across all KLAs.
- ◆ Document effective school policy procedures with the aim of improving and reporting achievements.
- ◆ Ensure that the procedure for placing students in specific programmes are effectively operated.
- ◆ Identify and provide linkage with other schools and community groups.
- ◆ Ensure that awareness is raised among staff/parents/students regarding the needs of gifted and talented students.
- ◆ Prepare a Gifted Education and Talent Development budget that allows for professional development on a whole school and individual basis, resources and class release time to development programmes.

All Teaching Staff

- ◆ Identify gifted and talented students and provide appropriate programmes for individuals
- ◆ Implement school policy and procedures.
- ◆ Monitor and evaluate school programmes.
- ◆ Establish and maintain liaison with parents.
- ◆ Ensure procedures for placement of students in specific programmes are operating effectively.
- ◆ Identify and manage resources.
- ◆ Identify personal needs for professional development.

Identification

As giftedness has many dimensions (abilities, personality and environmental factors), measures that go beyond academic achievement must be used to identify students whose abilities are not identified by tests and school performance.

Identification is seen as part of our overall provision for meeting the needs of **all** students, not only students with special provision. As such, identification will involve all teachers and form part of our total school programme.

When identifying "Gifted and Talented" students it will be remembered that it is preferable to include rather than exclude a student whom we are not sure of.

Both formal and informal methods will be **combined** by teachers to identify student's performance and potential.

This will be achieved through:

- ◆ Class grades
- ◆ Creativity and general ability
- ◆ Interviews with child/parent
- ◆ Teacher nominations
- ◆ Parent nominations
- ◆ Peer nominations
- ◆ Teacher and parent observation

- ◆ Exceptional achievements outside of school
- ◆ Student's interest
- ◆ Councillor advice
- ◆ Outside agencies

Identification and Provision for Children with Special Needs

Within our school, we are aware of students who may, for various reasons, fail to be identified as gifted and therefore not receive appropriate educational provision.

We are of aware of such students especially if they may be considered in more than one special needs group.

To overcome this, this policy recognises the need which may require modification of identification processes but which remain comprehensive and on-going, and testing procedures which may need to be modified to allow optimum performance.

Such students are the gifted:

- ◆ underachiever
- ◆ girls
- ◆ aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander
- ◆ ESL
- ◆ disabled

Curriculum and Teaching

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of **all** students with provision for talented students recognising their individual rate, style and complexity.

This is achieved through:

- ◆ provision of a differentiated curriculum within each Key Learning Area
- ◆ matching learning experiences to individual needs and abilities
- ◆ provision of planned, systematic and flexible learning experiences
- ◆ development of "higher order" thinking skills
- ◆ provision of the opportunity for specific skill development
- ◆ emphasising development of both individual abilities, achievement and co-operative skills

Classroom programming may therefore include:

- ◆ a "Gifted and Talented" focus within class programming
- ◆ individualised enrichment programmes
- ◆ curriculum extension
- ◆ systematic self instructional materials
- ◆ independent learning contracts with the students negotiating the contract components
- ◆ student pairing/group work that allows for leadership, co-operative decision making and student - initiated perspectives
- ◆ grouping according to ability, learning style and interests
- ◆ peer tutoring
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology assisted programmes
- ◆ excursions and camps
- ◆ interests centres/groups
- ◆ involvement in competitions both at the local and state level
- ◆ co-operative learning, critical thinking and problem solving activities
- ◆ opportunities to display creativity and to initiate discussion
- ◆ open-ended questioning activities and assignments centred around group work that is homogeneous and heterogeneous
- ◆ use of the library and librarian as back-up support for individual research of area of interests.

School Organisation

The policy and organisation of the school recognises and provides for the creative, academic, social and emotional needs of these students through:

- ◆ a commitment to the education of the gifted and talented

- ◆ provision of formal programming requirements designed to address the needs of the gifted and talented within each KLA
- ◆ employing a variety of teaching strategies
- ◆ grouping students according to experience, ability, personality and interests
- ◆ development of experiences consistent with the interests and capabilities of the talented
- ◆ withdrawal for periods of time to allow the talented to follow special programmes and work with like minded peers
- ◆ the provision of inservice programmes designed to allow teachers to understand and meet the needs of the gifted and talented
- ◆ raising the awareness of the special provisions that gifted and talented students require

School organisation may therefore include:

- ◆ augmented classes
- ◆ grading within stages and possibly across stages
- ◆ accelerated progression
- ◆ writing suitable contracts that can then be negotiated for students working at a level beyond their peers
- ◆ introducing individualised activities such as:
 - Interest groups
 - Clubs
 - Musical and sporting opportunities
 - Mathematics, English and Science competitions
 - Public Speaking
 - Debating
- ◆ opportunities on school assemblies to display and share talents

Parent and Community Involvement

At St Joseph's College parents and the community are encouraged to participate in the provision of specialised support services through:

- ◆ involving mentors/adult tutors with specific expertise on a class and school level.
- ◆ students being encouraged to
 - join community clubs and groups
 - visit libraries, museums and galleries

Staff Development

St Joseph's College seeks to provide for the creative, academic, social and emotional needs of the "Gifted and Talented" by raising the awareness of the special provisions of these students within staff through:

- ◆ providing support and professional development for the enhancement of teaching strategies and programming through development days and inservice. This will be achieved through:
 - courses on the identification and needs of the students and their teachers
 - courses on programmes to cater for these needs
 - courses on Critical Thinking Skills, Multiple Intelligences, Problem Solving
- ◆ inviting guests speakers at staff meetings
- ◆ using local resources and personnel
- ◆ updating teacher resource library through:
 - purchasing kits, units of work
 - subscribing to magazines and journals
- ◆ providing for parent development and support through:
 - evening information sessions
 - establishing a "Parent Support Network"

Evaluation

This policy will be continuously assessed to allow for change, additions and deletions in a process to refine and streamline. Thus, evolving a positive and productive policy.

Assessment will take the form of teacher observation and comment/suggestions and parent comment/suggestions.

Assessment will occur on a regular basis and will also be made to evaluate the provisions being made within each K.L.A. for gifted and talented students.

Resources

The resources needed for this policy to be fully implemented will be drawn from:

- Catholic Education Office
- other teachers
- Special Education teacher
- school Counsellor
- wider community