



Gifted Education Policy

Policy Rationale

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School has a responsibility to educate all students to their potential. We are committed to providing a rich and challenging curriculum for all our students; one that promotes and encourages each and every individual to achieve their full potential. We recognise that some students may be gifted and talented and require an appropriate, responsive learning environment.

Giftedness and talent may occur in many different areas including the creative arts, academic subjects, social and leadership skills and sporting interests. For the purpose of this document we are referring to children who display exceptional academic strengths.

Aims

At St Benedict's we aim to provide equality of opportunity for all students to be inspired, motivated and enthused by a comprehensive, challenging and innovative curriculum. We also aim to provide all students, in collaboration with their parents and the wider community, with an education that matches their social and emotional needs.

We aim to identify students who are gifted or talented and to ensure that the school responds to, and provides for their individual needs. We aim to support and foster the values of achievement, creative thinking and intellectual inquiry for all gifted and talented students, regardless of race, gender, socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds; and to ensure that these students are extended and enriched throughout their schooling as far as resources allow.

Definition

At St Benedict's we have adopted Francoys Gagne's definition of giftedness as it differentiates the terms 'gifted' and 'talented'. Gagne's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (Appendix 1) recognises giftedness as a broad concept that encompasses various abilities including intellectual, creative, leadership, social and physical skills. Gifted and talented students vary in terms of the nature and level of their abilities. It is critical that gifted and talented students be given appropriate opportunity, stimulation and experiences to develop their potential. The translation of giftedness into talent results from application to appropriate opportunities for learning, training and practice. While acknowledging the importance of innate ability, Gagne's model recognises the significant influence of environment, personality and chance on the developmental process.

We also recognise that giftedness occurs throughout all socio-economic groups, ethnicities, both genders, and in students with disabilities, including specific learning disabilities.

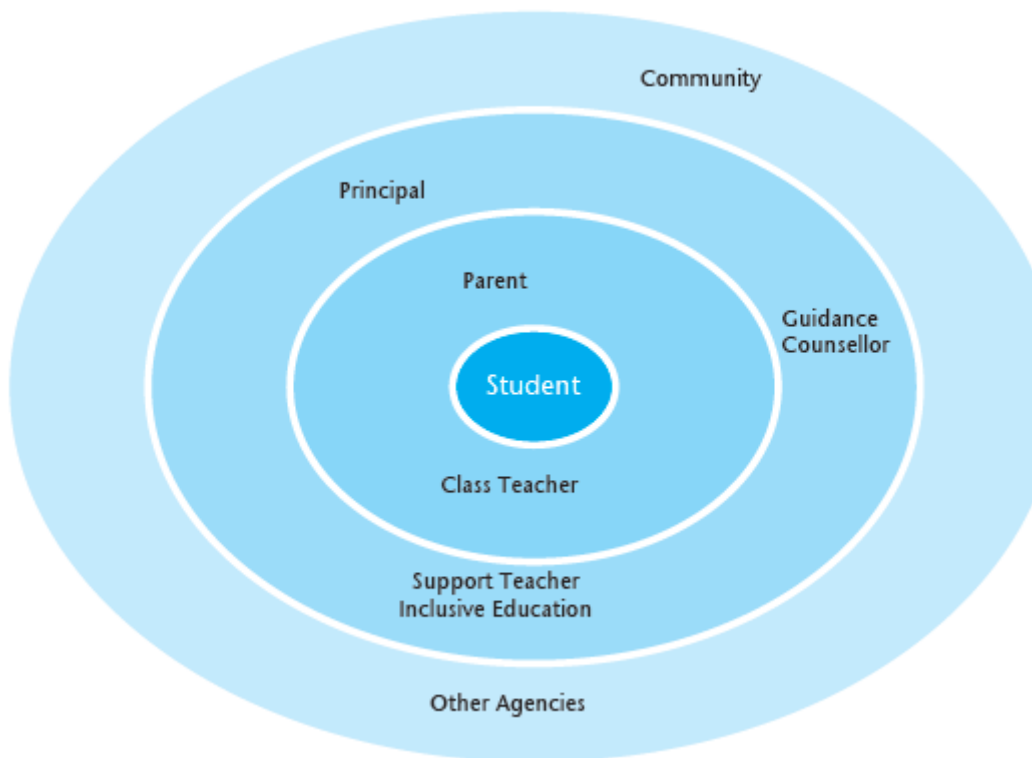
Identification

At St Benedict's we are committed to identifying our gifted and talented students so that their individual needs may be more appropriately met. We recognise that not all gifted and talented children are obvious achievers. Many underachieve as their potential is masked by factors such as actively disguising their giftedness and talents to seek peer acceptance, frustration, low self-esteem, lack of challenge, low teacher/parent expectations, non-English speaking background, behavioural problems or learning disabilities.

The identification process at St Benedict's is fully inclusive, recognising and celebrating the diversity of our school community. It is a continuous and ongoing process which uses a variety of methods. The Identification and Support Process for Gifted Students outlines the steps involved in identifying gifted students, as well as providing a guide to determining the appropriate level of support that may be required.

Responsibilities

At St Benedict's we recognise that a variety of stakeholders are responsible for the implementation of procedures and strategies that will maximise the learning opportunities for the gifted and talented students.



Key personnel and their responsibilities include:

- *Students:* Students are encouraged to be aware of their preferred learning styles, to pursue excellence, master new knowledge and skills, and actively seek to become independent learners.
- *Parents:* Parents are encouraged to work in collaborative partnerships with the school in order to support the learning of their gifted/talented child.

- *Classroom Teacher:* As classroom teachers are the key facilitators of learning, the day to day provision for all students including the gifted and talented students is their responsibility. This provision is based upon providing a curriculum that is differentiated in terms of learning experiences, teaching practices and teacher expectations so that content, learning processes and student tasks reflect different levels of knowledge, skills, interests and learning styles.
- *Guidance Counsellor:* The Guidance Counsellor has the responsibility of assisting the school principal, as part of a team, with the identification, planning and support for gifted and talented students.
- *Support Teacher: Inclusive Education:* The Support Teacher works as a member of the school team to enhance and extend learning outcomes for gifted and talented students. This may include the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the school's Gifted Education Policy, linking it with existing policies. The Support Teacher works with the Classroom Teacher, in a support role, with the identification, planning and support of identified students.
- *Principal:* The principal of St Benedict's Catholic Primary School will provide leadership in the school community to identify and respond appropriately to the individual needs of gifted and talented students, facilitate appropriate professional development for teachers, establish collaborative processes that involve all stakeholders; and provide appropriate resources for teachers in their implementation of programs for gifted students.

Provisions

At St Benedict's we provide a curriculum that encourages all students to pursue and develop their individual interests and abilities. Our teachers acknowledge students' different learning styles by including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities in lessons. Through differentiation, class teachers provide a curriculum that is academically challenging, intellectually stimulating, and sufficiently flexible to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the students. A differentiated curriculum is a program of activities that offers a variety of entry points for students who differ in abilities, knowledge and skills. In a differentiated curriculum, teachers offer different approaches to what students learn (content), how students learn (process) and how students demonstrate what they have learned (product). Differentiation also includes enrichment and extension activities.

Enrichment refers to the broadening of the curriculum to develop knowledge, application, thinking skills and attitudes, to a degree of complexity appropriate to the students' developmental level (Braggett, 1997). Enrichment activities are extra-curricular activities.

Extension activities involve the deepening of students' knowledge, understanding and skills.

We also work in partnership with parents, the community and other agencies to provide opportunities for individual children to demonstrate their full potential and develop individual aptitudes, abilities and talents. We acknowledge that learning is ongoing and takes place both within and beyond the school.

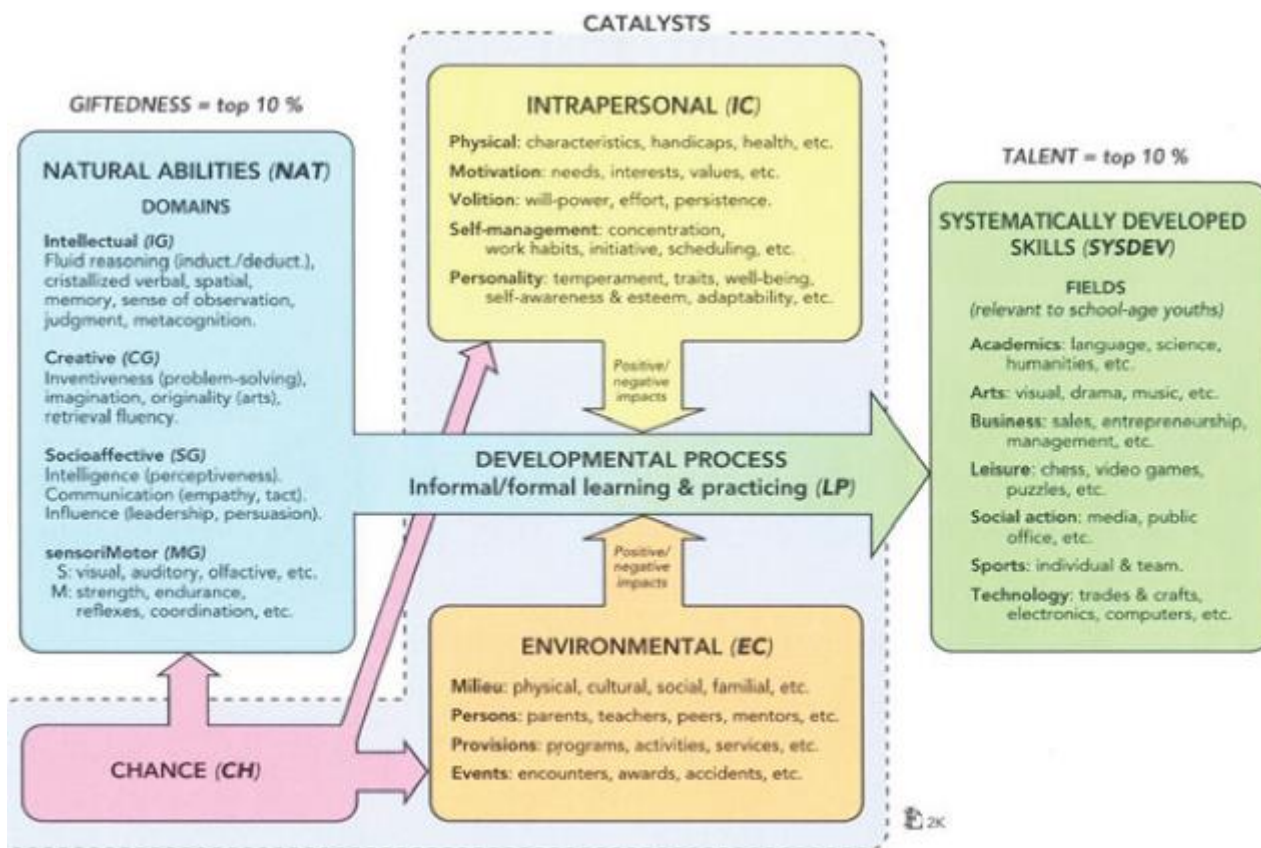
Professional Development

At St Benedict's we acknowledge that ongoing professional development and induction of staff is essential for catering for the needs of gifted and talented students. Staff are continually involved in professional learning associated with identifying, catering and implementing strategies to support gifted and talented students. Staff support each other through planning in teams and involvement in Professional Development Programs such as the AGQTP (Australian Government Quality Teacher Program) Gifted and Talented Education.

Review

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing review cycle.

Appendix 1



Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT.EN.2K)