



GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY P-6 2012

Each student at North Ainslie Primary (NAPS) is a unique and valued individual. We are committed to catering for individual differences and helping students reach their full potential: intellectually, physically, emotionally, aesthetically, spiritually and socially.

North Ainslie Primary School Gifted and Talented Policy

Purpose

This policy aims to cater for some members of our learning community who have gifts and talents that must be acknowledged and catered for in order for the learning outcomes of these students to be optimised.

Gifted and talented students are found in all communities regardless of their ethnic, cultural or socio-economic characteristics. The gifted population includes students who are underachieving and who have disabilities.

Definition

This definition reflects the distinction between ability and performance by acknowledging the importance of innate ability while also recognising the significant influence environment, personality and other factors have on the development of ability.

Giftedness refers to a student's outstanding ability in one or more domains (e.g. intellectual, creative, socioemotional or sensorimotor). Giftedness refers to potential distinctly beyond the average for the student's age.

Talent refers to outstanding performance in one or more fields within these domains (e.g. mathematics, science and technology, astronomy, sculpture athletics, languages): that is, talent emerges from giftedness as a consequence of the student's learning experiences. Talent denotes achievement distinctly beyond the average for a student's age as a result of application to training and practice.

Key Understandings

- Students of exceptional ability need to be identified as early as possible so that sound educational planning and practices can take place to support their needs. Early identification is crucial in ensuring that these children do not become disengaged from the learning process.
- It is important to build a school culture that acknowledges and celebrates the many facets of student performance or achievement.
- It is important to build a school culture that values and accepts exceptional students and fosters their whole development.

- Students learn best when a diverse and differentiated curriculum, catering for a wide range of abilities, preferred learning styles and varying social capabilities, is utilised.
- Classroom environments which encourage creative, divergent and higher-level thinking and an open-ended approach to learning will foster the emergence of gifts and talents.

Policy Responsibilities

The NAPS Community has a responsibility to:

- identify their gifted and talented students
- foster collaborative home-school partnerships to support gifted and talented students
- provide a range of opportunities and monitor and evaluate programs for their gifted and talented students
- provide opportunities for staff development in the education of gifted and talented students for principals, teachers and other appropriate personnel.

The School Principal has a responsibility to:

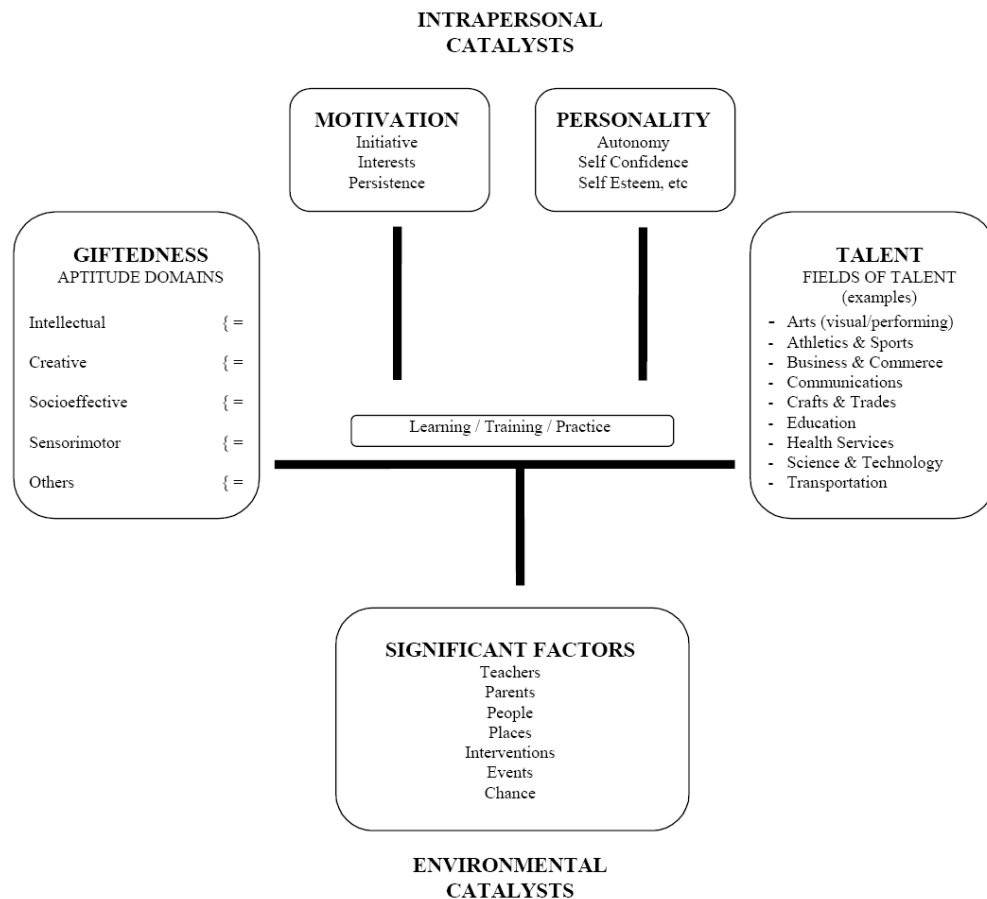
- identify their gifted and talented students so they can provide a range of learning opportunities
- decide when any form of accelerated progression is appropriate to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of individual gifted and talented students in Years K-12. Principals will recognise the rights of those with parental responsibilities/guardians to be fully informed and participate in all decisions relating to their child's education
- encourage teachers to promote diverse gifted and talented student program initiatives where appropriate
- encourage teachers to participate in appropriate professional development.

Teachers have the responsibility to:

- identify the gifted and talented students in their classes so they can provide a range of learning opportunities
- select and implement a variety of inclusive teaching strategies that will meet the needs of gifted and talented students
- participate in relevant professional development to enhance their delivery of gifted and talented programs

Guidelines to support the NAPS gifted and talented policy

Our school has the responsibility to recognise and develop the ability of our gifted and talented students by implementing programs to meet their educational needs.



Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent

Implementation Strategies

Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

A wide range of methods are needed to ensure that all gifted and talented students are identified. Such students may be difficult to identify. They may be:

- students from non-English speaking backgrounds
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students
- students disadvantaged by gender
- socioeconomically disadvantaged students
- students with physical and/or sensory disabilities
- students with specific learning difficulties
- students with behavioural problems.

The identification process must:

- be school wide
- be systematic
- be dynamic and ongoing
- be justifiable
- provide for early identification
- ensure that identification of students from disadvantaged and minority populations is not overlooked
- ensure that as many areas as possible of giftedness and talent are identified
- provide opportunities for the gifted students to emerge.

The identification of a student's strengths, talents and socio-emotional needs can be derived from information such as:

- parents - particularly in early identification of gifted and talented students
- IQ tests (verbal and non-verbal)
- standardised tests
- school records, achievement tests (e.g. reading, mathematics)
- anecdotal records
- identification checklists
- rating scales
- interpreters, translators (for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds)

The staff at North Ainslie Primary (NAPS) recognises that certain factors may inhibit the expression of giftedness or talents:

- Students may actively disguise their giftedness and talents to seek peer acceptance and thereby avoid identification.
- Students may actively disguise their giftedness and talents to avoid appearing different.
- Students may lack motivation to achieve in routine school-oriented tasks.
- Students belonging to those groups identified may need intervention programs to enable their giftedness to be realised as a talent.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

NAPS staff will use appropriate teaching and learning strategies to encourage high achievement, originality, problem solving, higher order thinking skills and creativity.

Teaching and learning strategies will include:

- empowering students to understand how they learn
- giving opportunities for students to initiate discussion and to think creatively
- guiding students through a range of problem-solving processes
- posing open-ended questions, activities and assignments
- using group work, to allow scope for leadership, cooperative decision making and student initiated perspectives
- making use of contract work, with students negotiating the contract components
- encouraging individual research
- involving community members with specific expertise as mentors
- introducing individualised or group enrichment/extension programs
- leadership of school-wide activities.

NAPS staff will commit to the following in order to enhance their delivery of gifted and talented programs:

- appoint a Gifted and Talented co-ordinator (may be the curriculum coordinator) and/or coordinators for specific programs
- attend network meetings
- attend professional development
- subscribe to relevant professional associations

Whole-school provisions for gifted and talented students at North Ainslie Primary will include:

Grouping.

North Ainslie Primary utilises multi-age classrooms that facilitate the flexible grouping of students to best meet their learning needs and provide access to appropriately differentiated curriculum.

Appropriate grouping involves bringing together gifted students of the same or different ages with others who have similar abilities, aptitudes and interests: guided reading, cooperative reading, guided writing, cooperative writing, ability graded mathematics groups (small group, class).

Acceleration.

Students who achieve curriculum outcomes more quickly than their peers may be accelerated, through curriculum compaction, content acceleration, or partial or full year level skipping. Information on previously accelerated students should be shared between teachers and /or schools to ensure continuity.

Units of Inquiry

At NAPS we recognise that stimulating, enriching, integrated programs will best enable students to develop “to the edge of their ability”, helping them reach their potential and maintain their enthusiasm for lifelong growth. Our units of inquiry extend gifted and talented students through integrated, student centred learning that is engaging and motivating. They develop independent learning skills to pursue further knowledge in areas of interest.

The curriculum for gifted students should be academically rigorous, intellectually stimulating, and sufficiently flexible to meet their educational, social and emotional needs.

Personalised Learning Plans

All students devise a set of personal goals related to their learning potential. The student, parents/carers and class teacher are involved in this process. The student is mentored regularly by the class teacher to evaluate progress and develop strategies for effective implementation of the goals.

Gifted and Talented Workshops.

These bring together the experiences of students, teachers, parents and community members.

Mentor Programs to link individual students with school or community members who have expertise in particular areas. In particular North Ainslie will utilise its strong connection with the ACT Schools' Volunteer Program.

Current Educational Programs

- Units of Inquiry P-6
- Tournament of Minds
- Rostrum
- Specialised visual art program years 3-6
- Specialised dance program years P-6
- School band years 5-6
- Drumming years 5-6
- Recorder groups years 1-2
- MIPSS: Choir years K-6
- Piano (as requested by parents)
- Canteen Committee
- Chess competitions
- MS Readathon
- Chief Minister's Reading Challenge
- UNSW competitions (English, Spelling, Writing, Mathematics, Science, ICT)
- SRC (leadership opportunities)
- Sports Leadership
- Peer mediation
- Specialist sporting clinics (soccer)
- Interschool sports (Austag, soccer, netball, rugby)
- Areas of interest : ACT Schools' Volunteers

Specific Criteria to Guide Student Placement

For accelerated progression of students K-12
(Adapted from Feldhuson, J F, Proctor, T B & Black, K N, 1986)

The following guidelines may be used to determine a student's ability for accelerated progression:

- When a student is being considered for accelerated progression, the school counsellor will carry out a comprehensive psychological evaluation of intellectual functioning, academic skills and socioemotional adjustment.
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- Academically, the student should demonstrate levels of skill that are well above the average of the class she or he would be going into.
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- Evaluation about the student's emotional maturity must include input from the student's parents and the school counsellor or psychologist. [Note: Gifted students are sometimes rejected by their classmates. Teachers should not confuse the absence of

close age peer relationships with social immaturity. Social or emotional difficulties may have been caused by inappropriately low grade placement. In such cases the problem may be alleviated by accelerated progression. Failure to advance a highly gifted student may result in poor study habits, apathy, lack of motivation, poor adjustment and under achievement.]

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- Ideally, accelerated progression will occur at natural transition points, such as the beginning of the school year.
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- A student's physical size or physical or sensory disability will not prohibit accelerated progression.
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- The accelerated progression will be reviewed regularly. This will take place, for example, after one term by a meeting of those involved in the original decision to accelerate (Principal, parents, class teacher, counsellor, student where deemed appropriate.)

For early entry to pre-school or primary school
(Adapted from Feldhuson, J F, Proctor, T B & Black, K N, 1986)

Early entry is a placement procedure, not an educational program. Chronological age should not determine suitability for early entry. Schools should ensure that an appropriate educational program is available if they decide on this type of student placement.

The school principal will use these guidelines when determining suitability for early entry to pre-school or Kindergarten:

- Early entry applicants should demonstrate abilities that are well above age-specific developmental norms.
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- Judgements about the student's social, emotional and intellectual maturity must include input from the student's parents and should include input from other sources e.g. the local gifted and talented support groups, teachers, school counsellors or independent psychologists. (Note: Some gifted and talented students may have social or emotional problems because they lack a compatible intellectual peer group. Teachers must not confuse the absence of close age peer relationships with social immaturity. Early entry may alleviate such problems.)
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- Ideally, early enrolment will occur at natural entry points, such as the beginning of the school year.
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- A student's physical size or physical or sensory disability should not prohibit early entry to school.
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- Advanced placement should be reviewed after one term by a meeting of those involved in the original placement (Principal, parents, class teacher, counsellor, student where deemed appropriate.)

Bibliography

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