

1.3 Gifted and Talented Policy

Policy Statement /Rationale

At Parnell District School, we recognise that some children achieve at a level higher than expected for their age in relation to the national curriculum. We also recognise that these children have needs which can at times catered for specifically within the classroom and then as extension and enrichment within the school. These children require as much challenge, stimulus and 'stretching' as other children may receive from the school curriculum.

Professor Francoys Gagne's, 'Differentiated model of Giftedness and Talent,' is used to guide the implementation of the school-wide programme. In it the term giftedness designates "the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed natural abilities (called gifts or aptitudes), in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places a child at least among the top 15% of his or her age peers. By contrast, the term talent designates the superior mastery of systematically developed abilities (or skills) and knowledge in at least one field of human activity, to a degree that places a child at least among the top 15% of his or her age peers."

Purposes

- To provide children with the opportunities and an environment in which their natural abilities (in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places a child at least among the top 15% of his or her age peer) can be developed into talent (in at least one field of human activity, to a degree that places a child at least among the top 15% of his or her age peers).
- To facilitate the process of talent development through the action of two catalyst; intrapersonal and environmental.
- To encourage and motivate children to develop their gifts into talents.
- When a child demonstrates a talent by an engagement in systematic learning, training practising and evaluating in a particular field/area, the child will be given support to intensify these four dimensions.
- To allow children, with a similar level of giftedness, to share ideas with each other by meeting regularly.
- To use vertical skill building to assist the learning processes of children involved.
- To empower staff to recognise and value the variance of learning abilities in all forms.

Guidelines

1. Classroom teachers are primarily responsible for meeting the academic, social, emotional and cultural needs of all children in their care during the school day.
2. Through the differentiation model of teaching programmes, the needs of all children will be met within mainstream classrooms. The Gifted and Talented programme will be offered to children who require individual/peer support to develop their giftedness.
3. The identification of Gifted and Talented children is to be ongoing and will guided by the five aptitude domains as described in Gagne's model: intellectual, creative, socioaffective , sensorimotor and "other " (see model, Appendix 1).
4. The school will use a balance of objective and subjective assessment procedures in the identification of children including: observation, anecdotal evidence, standardised testing (e.g. PAT) and parent consultation.

5. Staff and community strengths will be utilised, along with flexibility in staffing and /or programming.
6. Problem behaviour should not be a reason for non inclusion in a programme.
7. Inclusion in the G & T programme may not be permanent. A record of children in the programme will be maintained.
8. An annual 'G&T' report will be made to the B.O.T.

Conclusion

Curriculum Delivery must be flexible

Delivery of this programme is an enhancement beyond the normal school day.

Appendix I

Numerous G&T programmes are run:

- The Intellectual and Creative Domains.
 - Run in year group sessions. These are topic based and the activities are designed to address differing aspects of intellectual and creative abilities.
 - Mathematics within year groups
 - Future Problem Solving, Y 5-8 including Community Issues and Scenario Writing
 - Opportunities in the Arts: a gifted music group, Tongan dance group, Chinese dance group, An Indian dance group (being introduced in Term 2, 2008), creative dance, boys' dance, Technology (involving the Theatre, through the 'Edge,' 2008), visual arts (being introduced Term 2, 2008)
 - Literature –participation in the inter-school literature quiz. Second opportunity to participate in the School literature quiz, Book Week
 - Chess Club. Enter inter-school chess competitions.
 - Science
- The Socioaffective Domain.
 - Leadership opportunities – School Class Councillors, Peer Mediators (Cool Schools), School House Captains.
 - Cultural leadership – developing 'Mana' for Maori child within Nature group, leadership for Tongan and Indian children within their cultural dance groups.
 - Refereeing in chess club
 - The nature club to foster/nurture/share environmental concerns, passions, interests and issues.
- The Sensorimotor Domain
 - School Basketball teams with coaching from a professional.
 - School sports co-ordinators offering extension activities and monitoring individual progress.
- Others

Gagne's model identifies, 'Others' as a fifth domain. An example given is extrasensory perception. As yet, this domain is not used at this school.

Appendix II

Identification

As a school it is our policy to consider all the evidence presented before we continue further. Identification is a continuous, whole school process, underpinned by a procedure which also allows the focus to not be exclusively on the current cohort.

Each child who has been identified as having a need for additional enrichment has been identified through many methods.

- Children can be recognised by the parent and this needs to be shared with the class teacher or the school — a parent referral.

A parent referral can take many forms. A parent may refer by talking to the class teacher at a parent evening, through an appointment, or at enrolment. Parents through the school office can make referrals. Information can be collected at enrolment or through conversation and information passed directly to the Coordinator for gifted and talented. Other methods for referral include through the Coordinator and Principal.

- These children can also identify themselves or are identified by their peers as being more capable or 'the best' in something — a child or self referral.
- Class teachers regularly assess children in many areas, both curriculum based and recognising strengths in other areas such as social skills and learning styles. Class teacher's also become aware of 'giftedness,' as a result of:
 - talking to parents, carers and peers
 - observing how students approach routine work in class and activities outside of the classroom
 - observing students in a range of learning contexts to identify those who have social and leadership skills, aptitudes for problem solving or acute listening skills
 - observing responses to own work and talking to the students about what enables them to learn best
 - tracking from preceding years
 - looking for initiative in tackling tasks or adapting conditions to suit circumstances
 - monitoring student performance in standardised tests and other available test data and assessments.
 - judging progress made in the national curriculum and whether they are beyond the level of attainment expected for their age
 - developing an understanding of the students intrinsic values towards learning, including motivation, personality, and home background
- Academic benchmarks for teachers to consider are:
 - the benchmark for direct referral to the Coordinator is achievement in the top 5% across all curriculum areas
 - within the first six months at school the child displays characteristics of learning in reading and writing 2 years above chronological age. The child will achieve level IA in literacy curriculum, and achieve stage 3 within the Early Numeracy Project.
- ESOL students who may be gifted or talented are often best recognised by people who can speak to them in their native language.
- Outside agencies also contribute to the identification process, including Group Special Education, George Parkyn, Gifted Kids Programme and private Educational psychologists.

The following issues are further taken into account when identifying gifted and talented students;

- students who have all rounded giftedness and those with strengths in one or two areas,
- the range of qualitative data and quantitative data used,
- how the selection can be explained and justified to the parents, and
- the system of monitoring and reviewing to ensure that pupils with proven achievement and potential benefit from the provision provided.
- bias, related to who is identified and why
- Those individuals who are outstanding but refuse or show no immediate substantive

evidence of ability

- Subtypes of giftedness, including successful gifted, challenging gifted, underground gifted , dropout gifted , double-labelled gifted , autonomous gifted and culturally diverse gifted.
- Students who fall into these groups, culturally diverse, learning difficulties, disabilities, underachieving students — students who underachieve relative to their potential, lower socio-economic groups.

- Children who have been identified are placed on either an individual study programme or a group study planning depending on their specific need.

Characteristics of gifted and talented students will be varied. However, they are more likely to be able to demonstrate skills in some of these areas:

- Learning characteristics — processing learning quickly
- Creative thinking characteristics — have original lateral ideas
- Motivational characteristics — sets high standards and able to work independently
- Social leadership characteristics
- Self determination characteristics — assertive and self advocates