Ashmore’s Gifted and Talented Whole School Plan

2016 - 2020
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“All students regardless of race, age or gender, by virtue of their dignity as human persons have a right to an education that is situated to their particular needs and adapted to their ability.”
1.0 Rationale:
All students at Ashmore State School have the opportunity to develop their skills according to their ability so they can develop their true potential. It is our jobs as teachers to make sure we facilitate the growth of these specific abilities into talents. It is a teacher’s responsibility to identify these skills and challenge students accordingly to personalise their learning leading to optimal results. It is crucial that those students who have been identified as gifted and talented are given appropriate opportunities to engage, stimulate and develop their potential. It is the classroom teacher’s responsibility to:

- identify the special gifts and talents of students, implement effective learning strategies and provide appropriate resources
- Regularly monitor the performance of students using a range of assessment measures so that assessment informs teaching

Students can be gifted in one or multiple areas. These students have very unique educational needs, which need to be identified and extended upon in order to achieve optimal results. Although gifted and talented students have some needs in common with other students they also have specific abilities. Gifted students like all students are entitled to support, challenge and new learning.

This policy will outline the responsibilities and procedures of all staff in regards to gifted and talented education in respect of:

- identification
- grouping
- differentiated curriculum
- acceleration
- other educational strategies and programs

Our beliefs about differentiated learning

- Personalised learning puts the needs of the students first
- Personalised learning honours each student as an individual learner, recognises that each student has his or her own learning style, unique gifts, interests, aspirations and challenges to learning
- Every student has individualised goals determined by their assessment data
- Students goals and progress are monitored to inform teaching
- All staff inform their practices by deep analysis of student data
- Differentiated learning takes place across all curriculum areas
- All staff are involved in rigorous data recording
- All students are challenged and extended
2.0 The Research

Giftedness is a natural ability that requires the appropriate environment and supporting conditions to develop fully into a talent. Out of concern for equity, students with special needs due to learning difficulties or disabilities are provided with specialist educational provisions to support their development. Although gifted students are another group with special needs, equity is viewed as conflicting with excellence, and so the special educational needs of those who possess gifts and talents are often ignored (Gallagher, 2003; VanTassel-Baska, 1997).

Providing these educational interventions requires a focus on the quality of teaching for gifted students. One aspect of teaching is teachers’ understandings and attitudes. Lack of knowledge and understanding about giftedness is proposed to be largely responsible for the mistaken beliefs held by teachers (Clark, 2002; Collins, 2001; Gross, 1994).

Natural abilities or aptitudes act as the “raw material” or the constituent elements of talents. It follows from this relationship that talent necessarily implies the presence of well above average natural abilities: in most situations, one cannot become talented without first being gifted, or close to that threshold. The reverse is not true: high natural abilities may simply remain gifts, and not be translated into talents, as witnessed by the phenomenon of academic underachievement among intellectually gifted children (Gagne, 2009).

The Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT) comprises six components, each being assigned an identifying acronym. As described in the diagram below, (Gagne, 2004) the components demonstrate the progression from Natural Abilities or Gifts (G) to Competencies or Talents (T). This progression is facilitated through the Developmental Process (D), which is either assisted or hindered by factors that Gagne describes as catalysts. He groups these into Environmental (E) or Intrapersonal (I) and also includes the Chance component (C) as a factor that can impact on all of the contributing components of the model. This model is one that is being continuously refined with the diagram below being the latest version.
3.0 Aim:

- Identify at an early stage children who are considered Gifted and Talented according to our school criteria.
- Track those children and to monitor their progress providing a curriculum relevant to their needs which is in line with National Curriculum expectations.
- To provide opportunities for those on our Gifted and Talented register to access external activities aligned to their skills.
- Create good home school links for the Gifted and Talented offering support where possible.
- Update our school register on a termly basis and to inform parents/carers that their child has been included and why.

4.0 Definitions:

4.1 GIFTEDNESS designates the possession and use of outstanding natural abilities, called aptitudes, in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers. (Gagne, 2009)
4.2 TALENT designates the outstanding mastery of systematically developed abilities, called competencies (knowledge and skills), in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers who are or have been active in that field. (Gagne, 2009)

4.3 ACCELERATION is a placement process whereby students are placed with an age cohort ahead of their chronological age in one subject, multiple subjects or across a whole year level.

4.4 CURRICULUM COMPACTING is a form of differentiating whereby educational outcomes are compacted or removed where mastery is already demonstrated.

4.5 CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION - 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) (Maker, 2008)

4.6 EXTENSION is a curriculum differentiation strategy where students are provided with additional work such as projects, research questions or investigations to students so that their knowledge and understanding is extended and deepened.

4.7 PERSONALISED INDIVIDUAL PLAN (PIP) is a document where students are set agreed goals and given specific strategies that can be utilised in the completion of the goals. This is a tailored strategy designed to achieve optimal results from all students guided by data.

5.0 Policy Statement

1. All children (including those identified as Gifted) need to be provided with learning experiences tailored to their needs.

2. Gifted children need a curriculum, which provides a flexibility of structures and strategies.

3. Gifted children may be deeply motivated, unmotivated, divergent or convergent in their thinking and may show their abilities in a variety of ways.

4. Gifted children have needs that change because their talents are not static.

5. Gifted children exhibit a wide range of abilities and interests.

6. Gifted children may have particular learning requirements and need to be nurtured to ensure their potential is fully developed.
7. Children eligible for selection are those who excel or have the potential to excel in general or specific ability areas according to data and teacher observations.

8. Gifted children may underachieve in mainstream classroom, despite being identified as gifted. Superior performance and dedication to task are not always displayed by these children.

9. Underachievement in gifted children may manifest itself by behaviours such as poor work habits, lack of effort, low self-esteem, and disengaged behaviours.

10. Children may demonstrate different skills and abilities at home and school

11. School staff need to make judgements based on what a child demonstrates at school while recognising that, for a variety of reasons, a child may not be showing their true ability.

12. Extension will occur through curricular and co-curricular programs.

All gifted and talented learners need a rich learning environment that fosters wellbeing and learning outcomes consistent with their abilities. The learning environment needs to provide educational pathways and appropriately challenging enrichment, extension and acceleration experiences. Within the broad range of giftedness, different levels of intellectual potential and ability will require different types of educational provision.

6.0 Identification:

- It is the classroom teacher’s responsibility to refer all possible students to the G&T committee using the Sayler’s checklist. This checklist is to be submitted to the G&T coordinator.

- The G&T committee will meet at the beginning of each term where cases will be reviewed and new cases brought forward to the committee.

- Teachers must bring with them any evidence they have collected in class that demonstrates the student is potentially gifted and talented.

Identification, assessment and monitoring should incorporate a diverse combination of methods that may include:

- Diagnostic testing
- Standardised testing
- Pre-testing
- Learning styles inventories
- Parent checklist/interviews (Sayler’s checklist can be sent home for additional data, after identification meeting)
- Teacher nominations
7.0 Assessment

- Sages screening and identification will take place in Term 1.
- Screen all Prep - yr 3 possibilities with K-3 screener.
• Screen all yr 4-6 possibilities with 4-8 screener.

8.0 Monitoring

• Identification and monitoring of students eligible for extension is an on-going process.

• The progress of students [G Drive> Coredata> Curriculum> 2013> G&T] eligible for extension will be monitored on an on-going basis using a range of strategies including testing, observation and interview.

• Discussion of students’ progress will occur in G&T committee meetings along with class teachers. The G&T committee will be available to work with individual teachers to assist them to plan and monitor extension programs for students.

• Modification or change to an extension program can be negotiated between the teacher and the student at any time or at the end of the period agreed.

• Where extension opportunities have been taken up by a student, it would be beneficial to inform all stakeholders with comments on students’ progress and participation within the extension program.

9.0 Evaluation of Programs for Students Eligible for Extension

A range of strategies will be used such as:

• Moderation of student work

• Student, parent and teacher satisfaction surveys and or interviews

• Formative and summative assessment

10.0 Individual class teachers responsibility to G&T students

1.1 giving opportunities for students to initiate discussion and to think creatively

1.2 curriculum compacting to allow more time to pursue studies at a greater breadth and depth

1.3 guiding students through a range of problem-solving processes

1.4 explicit teaching of thinking skills and decision making skills

1.5 use teaching tools which encourage the development of higher order thinking skills such as posing open-ended and higher order questions, activities and assignments, based on Bloom’s Taxonomy, creative problem solving and moral dilemmas

1.6 recognising the variations in learning styles of each individual

1.7 providing opportunity for a range of presentation methods for final product

1.8 using group work, allowing scope for leadership, co-operative decision making and student-initiated perspectives

1.9 making use of contract work to promote student direction, with students negotiating the contract components

1.10 encouraging and scaffolding individual research
1.11 providing opportunities for peer tutoring
1.12 providing access to facilities and mentoring for experimentation and risk taking

- All teachers are expected to encourage high achievement, originality, problem-solving, higher order thinking skills and creativity in their classrooms.

- In addition, teachers need to recognise that being gifted and talented does not necessarily equate with social maturity, good behaviour or emotional stability.

- Like all adolescents, gifted and talented students will exhibit the full range of behavioural problems and these can be exacerbated by a concern that their talents set them apart from the norm. Indeed, some gifted and talented students will play down their talents and under-achieve so that they can fit in with peers. Others will misbehave because of boredom while some will refuse to conform to school expectations because it is sometimes their only outlet for rebellion.

Planning of G&T students

11.0 Acceleration

In order to meet the needs of some gifted and talented students it may be necessary to consider acceleration of students. Acceleration/extension within the grade may be achieved within the normal classroom through contract work or more demanding content or accelerating students within a Stage. This is the responsibility of individual teachers in conjunction with the G&T committee. It is also possible that some students will meet the outcomes of courses earlier than their age cohort and so may need to be accelerated, either in one subject or across all subjects. The Principal is responsible for all decisions relating to acceleration of students and decisions to accelerate are made in conjunction with parents, the G&T committee, HOC and the classroom teacher.
## 12.0 Extension programs

A range of extension programs can be offered to students in play breaks or before and after school to cater to their talents. Participation in these groups should be negotiated with classroom teachers to ensure students choose a group that will develop their giftedness into talents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Speaking</td>
<td>Debating and public speaking skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Sci-Fi or Sci-Fact UNIfy program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Write On- UNIfy program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>Critical thinking - UNIfy program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Club</td>
<td>A group who meet to discuss a book or books that they have read - critical analysis of author style etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising/ Charity work</td>
<td>Run charity fundraisers within the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Making</td>
<td>Work with the writing group to produce images and motion clips to run over the schools television systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maths club</td>
<td>Developing problem solving skills. Could be run through an Ed Studio or virtual classroom. Maths Olympiad, questions etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chess club</td>
<td>Gardiner Chess club after school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Contribute to the school newsletters with events or interesting stories from around the school. Ashmore State School Journalists. Work towards outside competitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Drama club – performing arts Drama performances at Performance Night and assemblies, talent quests etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Exhibitions, Competitions, workshops – could organise guests to come out in lunch breaks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking Skills</td>
<td>Blooms, Thinker’s keys, etc. High order thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>Individual and team games and competitions, school and local coaching</td>
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Music

Band, choir etc

These are not stand-alone programs. For example, the Charity group could join the Drama group and put on a performance to raise funds.

References


Colangelo & G. A. Davis (Eds.), Handbook of gifted education (3rd ed.) (pp. 11-23). Boston: Pearson Education.