Mary MacKillop Catholic College, Wakeley

GIFTED & TALENTED POLICY

RATIONALE:

The moral purpose of Catholic education is to “fuel hope in all our students through fostering the attainment of their full human potential”. At Mary MacKillop Catholic College our mission is to ‘form young women Called to Life to make a difference in the world’. This Gifted and Talented Policy outlines how staff, students, parents and the wider community of Mary MacKillop Catholic College will ensure that students who are identified as gifted and talented will be provided with educational opportunities that engage them in reaching their full potential.

Mary MacKillop Catholic College supports the The Gifted Education Policy, 2014, for systemic Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney. This policy sets out the mandate for all teachers and schools to identify, support and make provisions for gifted and talented students in their care.

Mary MacKillop Catholic College as a school in the Josephite tradition is founded upon the works of Mary MacKillop, herself a pioneer in the education of young people from marginalised and disadvantaged situations. This College serves the diverse communities of the Fairfield LGA. The Fairfield LGA is home to many socially disadvantaged peoples, with one of the lowest socioeconomic status areas of the Sydney region and with this area home to many newly arrived migrant and refugee families. At Mary MacKillop Catholic College we are a community enriched by much cultural diversity that is called to serve many families that have arrived recently in Australia through migration and refugee programs. As such this Gifted and Talented Policy requires that the identification, support and provision offered in this College is always founded upon sound principles of gifted education for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. This supports the work of the Archbishop’s Charter for Catholic Schools which requires that we provide “a Catholic pedagogy that fosters the development of the intellect, moral knowledge, understanding and reasoning in a relational, social and cultural context” (Archbishop’s Charter, 2).
GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

This policy adopts the definitions of giftedness and talent based on Gagne’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (2010).

- **Giftedness** is the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed outstanding natural abilities or aptitudes (called gifts), in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of age peers. Domains include intellectual, creative, psychomotor and socio-emotional domains.

- **Talent** is the outstanding mastery of systematically developed performance (knowledge and skills) in at least one field of human activity to a degree that places the individual at least among the top 10% of learning peers.

Thus, the Mary MacKillop Catholic College community:

- acknowledges the concept of giftedness as naturally occurring across all cultures and varying socio-economic contexts
- accepts the responsibility to identify gifted and talented students
- recognises that various environmental and interpersonal catalysts exist that will influence the development of giftedness into talent
● accepts that many students that join our community, particularly those who experience social disadvantage and/or are recently arrived migrants or refugees, may experience social, cultural and or linguistic barriers that will mask giftedness

● commits itself to ensuring all policies, processes and programs that support the identification, support and provision of gifted and talented students are culturally and socially inclusive in order that we are meeting the challenges of our demographic populations

● accepts that gifted learners may be twice or multi-exceptional and that such learning disability, language processing or social challenges may mask their giftedness

● commits itself to supporting all gifted and talented learners that are twice or multi-exceptional in accessing a curriculum that is rigourous, engaging and challenging

● acknowledges the dangers of erroneous teacher and school perceptions about giftedness amongst diverse populations and the need to induct all new members of the community in their understanding of giftedness and talents for students from socially, psychologically, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and contexts

● acknowledges that it is the right of all gifted and talented students to receive an education that is responsive to their educational needs through appropriate provisions and programs to ensure curriculum equity

● fosters a climate of academic care and wellbeing that differentiates its approach in order to cater for the specific social and emotional needs of gifted and talented students

● commits itself to the ongoing formation and development of flexible learning grouping practices to ensure that learning pathways are open for all students, especially gifted students, to be able to access curriculum options that cater to needs, interests and abilities

● accepts that gifted and talented students require differentiation of assessment, which is inclusive of assessment for, of and as learning that offers enrichment, extension and/or acceleration that may extend across one or more curriculum areas and/or stages of learning

● maintains an assessment and reporting process that will equitably record, document and reward achievement for gifted and talented students

● recognises that parents as the primary educators of their children have an essential role in the identification, support and provision for gifted and talented students and we commit ourselves to working as collaborative partners in that education

● commits itself to the professional development and learning of all staff to ensure that effective gifted education pedagogy is continually improving in all aspects of the College’s educational program
POLICY & PROCEDURE:

Therefore teachers and leaders, in the design, development and delivery of identification, support and provision for gifted and talented students at Mary MacKillop Catholic College, will:

- Invoke Gagne’s Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent and its’ underlying principles of giftedness and talent across the gifted education program offered in the College.
- Implement a gifted education program that is operating within the standards of the CEO Sydney Newman Stream Project

Identification

- Identify gifted and talented students within this community using a range of objective and subjective measures of giftedness, including norm-referenced, standardised tests from the Australian Council for Educational Research and/or Pearson’s Australia, parent and teacher nomination via checklists and interviews, previous performance data and transition data. The triangulation of all available evidence is essential in making effective decisions.
- Convene annual data meetings of relevant stakeholders to utilise all available objective and subjective measures to make a determination about the identification of gifted and talented students and the placement of students into flexible learning groupings.
- Include within this identification process additional measures to make effective decisions in the identification of students who come to us as new arrivals migrants with EALD, especially students who have been refugees with interrupted schooling. An EALD practitioner will undertake a school history with parents and the student and in doing so apply the MMCC Gifted EALD Identification Checklist. The EALD practitioner will liaise with the Leader of Learning - Professional Learning Pathway and Leader of Learning - Student Learning Pathway to make an identification and to determine a suitable flexible grouping pathway given language and literacy acquisition and readiness to ensure social and emotional wellbeing. If deemed appropriate students will undertake RAVENs and/or Naglieri Non-Verbal Ability Test. Identification processes will additionally need to consider students literacy and numeracy needs and may include achievement data where available from overseas schooling experiences, writing samples analysed to the EALD Learning Progression, NAPLAN testing if undertaken and any other evidence available. Identification may also include a graduated movement into the Newman Stream. The triangulation of all available evidence is essential in making effective decisions.
- Include within this identification process opportunities for collaborative work with the Special Education practitioners and Co-ordinator's of Learning - Year in order to identify any twice or multi exceptional students or gifted underachievers whom may have an additional learning need and/or are underachieving as a result of family, social and/or cultural contextual factors. Identification may also include a graduated movement into the Newman Stream as health and wellbeing factors are to be prioritised. The triangulation of all available evidence is essential in making effective decisions.
- Communicate with parents about the identification of giftedness and placement into the Newman Stream for flexible groupings.
- Maintain a student data tracking of available data sources in order to support the ongoing monitoring and progress of students and their learning achievement.
- Utilise the Learning Management System (IRIS) to provide for teachers quality data forms about all students learning and for them to contribute to further identification of gifted and talented students.
- Value and build a rich data platform to inform identification, teaching and learning and supporting practitioners in working with gifted and talented students in the College.

Support
Provision

- Utilise the Diverse Learning Needs Case Management Model to ensure support and provision are made for all gifted and talented students. Case managers are expected to support twice and multi-exceptional learners through a Personalised Learning Plan or an Individual Educational Plan as appropriate to need.
- Collaborate with our onsite psychologists, Psychlinx, in the support of twice or multi-exceptional, highly gifted and/or at-risk gifted and talented students in a broader case team approach as appropriate to need.
- Utilise the Connected Learning Circle (CLC) and Pastoral Care programs to support academic care and wellbeing and to build programs that support gifted and talented students. The CLC program includes structures for teacher-peer and peer-peer mentoring and for all students to set and chart learning goals with a teacher. The CLC teacher should be included in any individual planning for gifted and talented students.
- Engage all teaching and support staff in ongoing, high quality professional learning opportunities in gifted education within the schools resources capacity to ensure that identification, support and provisions are continually improving for gifted and talented students.
- Maintain annual parent information evenings about the flexible learning grouping model and its operation at Mary MacKillop Catholic College.
- Build collaborative and supportive home-school partnerships that promote parents and guardians as the primary educators and that generate genuine dialogue about learning, academic care and wellbeing. Maintain the roles of Arabic and Vietnamese Liaison Officer to support this work. Utilise the Parent Advisory Group and our Bridge Program as a conduit to informing the parent body of our work more broadly.
- Celebrate high achievement in all domains of giftedness through the Mary MacKillop Catholic College awards system and in various forms of College communication including the College Website, College Flyer, Staff Bulletins and via year, house and College based assemblies. Hold an annual Newman Symposium to showcase the learning and achievement of gifted and talented students within the Newman Stream.

Provision

- Implement student flexible learning grouping practices that incorporate a Newman Stream grouping that caters for gifted and talented students through the differentiation of curriculum and learning.
- Review timetabling structures for flexibility and models for accelerative options to be able to offer increasing options for subject and grade acceleration into the future.
- Use data from a range of sources to inform the scope and sequencing and design of differentiated educational programs, specifically for their Newman classes, and ensure they aligned with the BOSTES syllabus for the Australian Curriculum.
- Develop a rich curriculum for gifted and talented students supported by effective gifted education pedagogy. This should be achieved via enrichment, extension or acceleration options as appropriate to the curriculum and the capacity of the school’s resources. All subject teachers of Newman Stream classes are expected to differentiate for all learners with variations to pace, depth, breadth and/or complexity of the content, process, product or environment of the mainstream curriculum.
- Collaboration of teachers, Coordinators of Learning - KLA and gifted education practitioners will be required to plan, implement, evaluate and make further adjustments to appropriate enrichment, extension and accelerative options, suited to our local context, for moderately, highly, exceptionally and/or profoundly gifted and talented students. This may be in the form of a Personalised Learning Plan or an Individual Educational Plan.
- Utilise assessment practices as a form of data to inform learning design and curriculum adjustment. This should include pre and post assessment options to be able to observe in content analysis the growth in student learning. Mastery of content knowledge and skills in pre-assessment is considered 80 - 85% of the task presented and thus teachers would be required to work with the gifted education practitioners to adjust the curriculum via compacting or telescoping. Dynamic assessment approaches and/or off-level testing may be utilised to assist in additional identification of gifted and talented learners.
● Provide access for identified Newman students, and other students who may be able to access this level of curriculum, to differentiated assessment tasks that provide appropriate extension of syllabus outcomes.

● Provide an aligned assessment and reporting processes that incorporates and streamlines methods for the documentation and reporting to parents and the community the achievement of students completing differentiated assessment tasks for Newman Extension.

● Undertake evaluations of the Newman programs and their provisions via annual compliance checking processes by gifted education practitioners working with Coordinator of Learning - KLA and Leader of Learning - Student Learning Pathways.

● Understand and respond to the socio-emotional characteristics of gifted students and incorporate these in the academic curriculum and within the Connected Learning Circle and Pastoral Care programs.

● Provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to develop and exercise leadership in the school community

● Provide opportunities for gifted and talented students to engage in external and internal enrichment and/or extension opportunities, especially those designed for gifted and talented students.