

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS Guidelines

Next review date: January 2022

Last reviewed: January 2021

By: Dean of Studies

St Mary's is an inclusive school and welcomes students of all abilities. We are dedicated to, and recognise a whole-school responsibility to, work towards all students achieving their personal best.

St Mary's aims to cater for the individual learning needs of all students. We aim to identify academically gifted students and then provide learning and challenge appropriate to students' ability, maturity and individual strengths and weaknesses.

GUIDELINES

Definition of Gifted and Talented

St Mary's recognises that every student has personal strengths. However, gifted students are recognised as those who achieve in the top 10% in any learning area, standardised tests of achievement or on tests of intellectual potential (Gagne, 2000). Gagne (1995) argues that the terms gifted and talent should not be used synonymously and states that giftedness refers to "competence which is distinctly above average in one or more domains of ability" and talent refers to "performance which is distinctly above average in one or more fields of endeavour".

St Mary's aims to identify and extend students who are already translating their giftedness into talent, and identify those students who may need further support and encouragement to turn their gifts into talent throughout their time at St Mary's (ie students who are gifted but underachieving).

Identification

The identification of students who may be gifted is a process of collecting and comparing information from various sources and developing a profile of each student in order to determine what strategies are appropriate for each individual. Information from any of the following sources may be used:

- Independent psychometric assessment (eg. WISPSI, WISC, WYATT).
- Standardised tests of achievement (eg. Neale, TORCH, WALNA, NAPLAN, Wood & Lowther).
- Standardised tests of potential (eg. NFER-Nelson, MYATT).
- Allwell scholarship testing.
- Information from previous schools.
- Teacher nomination.
- Parent information (through use of parent checklists upon school entry).
- Off-level testing (for candidates for acceleration or early-entry).

Note: No one source of information in isolation will be considered proof of giftedness. Conversely, St Mary's also recognises that some students, while undoubtedly showing evidence of giftedness, may not be suitable for all types of provision due to the presence of dual exceptionality or other social-emotional issues.

Dual Exceptionality

Students who have a learning difficulty or disability may also be gifted. There are processes in the school that aim to identify and cater for students who may have learning difficulties, disabilities or other social-emotional difficulties.

PROVISION

St Mary's acknowledges that different interventions are appropriate for students at different ages and circumstances. We also recognise that some students may have the potential to succeed but not the necessary skills and may need access support to address both their learning difficulty and their area of giftedness. It is the school's intention to ensure all teachers are skilled in differentiating the teaching and learning within their classroom, so that students of all abilities can learn and experience challenge at their level of ability. In addition, students who are identified as gifted may be offered access to the following programmes:

- Extension Maths group (Years 3-6) – students in top 5% on standardised numeracy tests or non-verbal test of potential, or teacher nomination.
- Extension Literacy group (Years 3-6) – students in top 5% on standardised literacy tests or verbal test of potential, or teacher nomination.
- Placement in the Year 7 extension class (in all subjects).
- Two-language class in Year 8, or one of two extension classes, with separate mathematics extension placement.
- Extension classes in Learning Area/s of strength (Years 9-10) - teacher nomination.
- ATAR Courses of Study (Years 11-12, Year 10 optional for accelerated students) – for students showing appropriate levels of knowledge and ability to achieve in chosen course, based on previous assessments.
- Early entry into higher year – for students showing appropriate levels of knowledge and ability based on previous assessments, and parent nomination.
- Partial acceleration (into one or more subjects) – students identified by external testing, by teachers or parents, after careful assessment, in subject of strength.
- Full acceleration (into next year level) – students in top 2% on independent psychometric assessment and achieving at least average level across most learning areas in above year (on off-level testing) and demonstrating advanced social-emotional maturity.
- A range of extension activities such as:

Future Problem Solving, SCRAM, Tournament of Minds, Chess Club, Mathematics competitions such as Have Sum Fun, Natural Maths and Maths Challenge, Spectra and Crest Science programmes, Science competitions such as BrainBee, Engineering Challenge and the BioGeneius Competition, United Nations Youth Association, Sir Charles Court Young Leaders Programme, Mock Trials, Hammerskjold Trophy, the West Australian Young Writers competition, Philosothon, and others as may arise.