



Catholic Education
Diocese of Cairns
*Learning with Faith
and Vision*

Policy

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Gifted Education

Purpose

This document provides a policy setting to guide schools in the the provision of Gifted Education and the development of school policies and procedures to meet the needs of gifted students.

Policy

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Cairns will develop objective and equitable practices that promote a culture of excellence for gifted students whilst creating a learning environment that fosters student wellbeing and learning outcomes consistent with their abilities.

Rationale

All students regardless of race, age or gender, by virtue of their dignity as human persons, have a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and adapted to this ability¹.

Catholic Education - Diocese of Cairns has a focus on the holistic growth of the individual person as its prime educational purpose². We want to give all learners the opportunity to become confident, just and productive human beings who develop values and skills to serve their local and global community³.

The Cairns CES *Learning Framework* refers to learners as 'unique individuals who bring their own strengths, talents and needs to the learning process'³. We believe that learning is most powerful when the individual needs of the learner are considered and therefore, education for gifted students provides the inspiration for these learners to achieve their personal best.

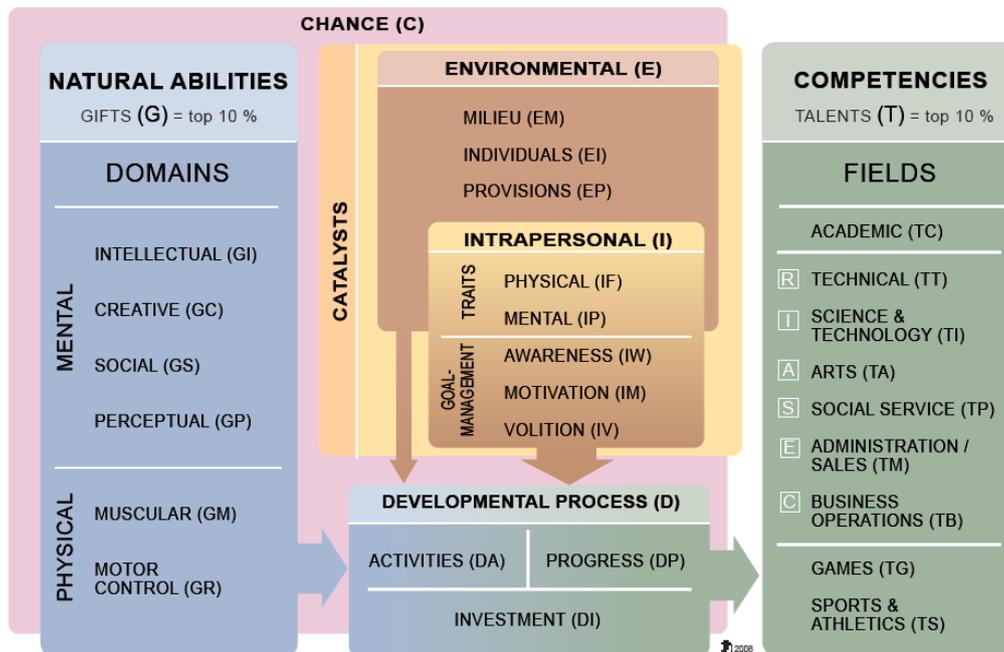
The policy is based on the underlying principles of giftedness and talent based on François Gagné's (2003) Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT)⁴. The Gagné model differentiates between natural abilities (gifts or aptitudes) and systematically developed skills (talents).

Giftedness: Gagné defines giftedness as the possession of natural abilities or aptitudes at levels significantly beyond what might be expected for one's age. As the diagram opposite illustrates, a student might be significantly gifted in any one of the cognitive, creative, socio-affective or sensori-motor domains—or in several, or in all. The key to Gagné's view of giftedness is that it defines outstanding **potential** rather than outstanding performance⁵.

Talent: While giftedness equates with high ability, talent equates with high achievement. Gagné defines talent as achievement or **performance** at a level significantly beyond what might be expected from same-age-peers in one or more fields of human activity⁵.

The difference is that giftedness is the potential to achieve and talent is the realisation of that potential in accordance with external catalysts such as chance, environmental and interpersonal influences. Talent emerges from giftedness or ability as a consequence of the student's learning experience⁶.

Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT)



The policy for Gifted Education has been developed to establish the basic principles of gifted education. In keeping with the Gagné model, it is the school's responsibility to seek out students who are gifted but not yet talented and to assist them to develop their abilities into achievements⁶. This Position Statement will inform schools' policies and practices that meet the needs of students who are gifted, their parents/carers and educators. It sets out a shared understanding and a collective responsibility to ensure that gifted students are provided with opportunities to develop their abilities and to meet their potential for exceptional achievement^{7,8}.

This policy is underpinned by the core principle that made in the image of God, every human being is unique, possessing gifts which should be developed and should be treated with respect and dignity⁹.

Consequences

Catholic schools will establish appropriate policies and procedures that:

- Enrich our awareness of the prevalence and specific needs of gifted students.
- Ensure equitable and objective identification processes of gifted students, regardless of their ethnicity, culture, location, disability, gender or socio-economic status.
- Foster collaborative and cooperative home-school partnerships to support gifted students to develop their abilities and to foster wellbeing and learning outcomes.
- Provide a range of opportunities and to monitor and evaluate programmes that meet the specific needs of gifted students.
- Support teachers in the identification of and programme provision for gifted students in their classes.
- Promote cooperation and collaboration of school provisions for gifted students within

and amongst schools to maximize learning opportunities for gifted students.

- Establish collaborative processes and networking beyond the school including between primary and secondary colleges, liaising with tertiary and other institutions, to increase access to programmes, expertise, facilities, information and transition processes for gifted students.
- Provide opportunities for staff professional development in the education of gifted students.

Reflection

References and further reading:

1. Declaration on Christian Education (1965) GRAVISSIMUM EDUCATIONIS Proclaimed by Pope Paul VI October 28, 1965.
2. Catholic Education – Diocese of Cairns (2008) *Schools & Colleges Defining Features*, Cairns.
3. Catholic Education – Diocese of Cairns (2007) *Learning Framework*, Cairns.
4. Gagné, F (2003) 'Transforming gifts into talents: The DMGT as a developmental theory', In Colangelo, N & Davis, G (Eds) *Handbook of Gifted Education* (3rd ed.), pp. 60-74, Allyn & Bacon, Boston.
5. Gifted Education Research, Resource and Information Centre (GERRIC) (2005) *Gifted and Talented Professional Development Package for Teachers*, Federal Department for Education, Science and Training (DEST and University of New South Wales, Sydney).
http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/Gifted_Education_Professional_Development_Package.htm#publication
6. Gagné, F (2008) 'Building gifts into talents: Brief overview of the DMGT 2.0'. Presented at the 'Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talents' seminar in Cairns, July 2011.
<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/assets/pdf/poldmgtcolrdiag.pdf>
7. Queensland Government - Department of Education, Training and the Arts (2004) *Framework for Gifted Education Revised Edition*. Brisbane. <http://education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports/pdfs/giftedandtalfrwk.pdf>
8. Catholic Education Office, Sydney (2007), *Gifted Education K-12 Position Paper*, Sydney.
9. Catholic Education – Diocese of Cairns (2008) *A Catholic School for your Child?*, Cairns.
10. NSW Department of Education & Training (2004), *Policy & Implementation Strategies for the Education of Gifted and Talented Students*, Sydney. <http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/support/index.htm>

See also (Related Policies and Guidelines)

Policy - Inclusive Education