

A Gifted Education Statement

FOR THE BROKEN BAY DIOCESAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

which provides guidance for principals,
teachers and Catholic Schools Office
personnel in the development and evaluation
of gifted/high ability initiatives K-12

Gifted Education

Foundational Beliefs

The Broken Bay Diocesan School System is committed to the education of gifted/high ability students in an inclusive setting. Such students are found across all cultures and socio-economic backgrounds and have diverse learning needs. The Catholic Worldview obliges schools and teachers to respect and understand the unique dignity of each student in their care and promote equity and excellence. Each gifted learner is a unique individual with their own abilities, needs and personal context.



An effective system approach

Leadership

School leaders are required to be pedagogical leaders to ensure:

- Development of shared beliefs about gifted education
- Shared ownership and participation in decision making throughout the school
- Roles and responsibilities of teachers are clearly defined
- Identification of the professional learning needs of staff
- Leadership of gifted education by designated staff to sustain effective practices across the school

Identification

Identification of gifted/high ability students is complex and requires:

- A system wide definition of gifted/high ability students
- A school wide identification process that is inclusive of gender, race, culture, socio-economic background and geographic location
- A range of effective qualitative and quantitative assessment tools informing decision making
- Early identification of gifted/high ability students

Differentiation Across The Curriculum

Differentiation requires teachers to recognise and commit to planning for student difference and involves:

- School wide differentiated practice within classrooms
- Teaching programs responding to the wide range of learners
- Opportunities for learning enrichment and higher order thinking
- Data to inform teaching
- High expectations for all students
- Curriculum adjustments allowing students to progress at faster rates and learn at a deeper level





Assessment and Monitoring

School wide assessment and monitoring procedures which include:

- Comprehensive data informing point of instruction and measuring growth
- Regular, precise and ongoing data collection
- A range of assessment tools in conjunction with pre-testing, post-testing and off level assessment
- Modified reporting procedures as needed

School and Classroom Organisation

Gifted/high ability learners require flexible school wide structures such as:

- Effective transition procedures between grades and schools
- A variety of grouping strategies responsive to student needs
- Opportunities to work with like-minded peers
- A clear process for early entry and acceleration with continued monitoring
- Collaborative planning addressing student needs
- A variety of enrichment opportunities



Professional Learning

Professional Learning can improve teacher practice and student outcomes by providing:

- Authentic alignment with school improvement
- Opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice
- A clear link between teacher learning and improved student outcomes



Home, School and Community Partnerships

Catholic educational communities can foster the potential of gifted/high ability students by establishing:

- Effective home, school and community partnerships
- Regular communication with parents and caregivers about student progress and achievement
- A range of connections for parents to learn more about gifted/high ability students

There are a variety of gifts but always the same spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people it is the same God who is working in all of them.

(1Cor. 12:4-7)



Gifted/high ability students exhibit the following three essential characteristics in varying degrees and kind:

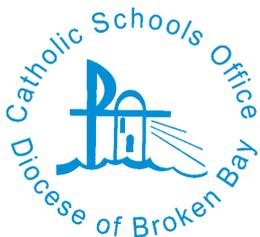
- quick comprehension of complex ideas
- ease and speed of learning
- abstract thinking

They also display natural ability in at least one domain (intellectual, creative, physical, social) which places them in approximately the top 10% of age peers.

Talented students exhibit the three essential characteristics above as well as volition (self direction, effort and perseverance).

These students are performing in at least one domain (intellectual, creative, physical, social) which places them in approximately the top 10% of age peers.

Underachievers (Davis & Rimm 2004) show a discrepancy between some index of their actual ability and their school performance.



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References

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