



A Plan for the Education of Gifted Students at Indooroopilly State School



April 2005

A Policy for the Education of Gifted Students at Indooroopilly State School

At Indooroopilly School we believe that..." All students, including students who are gifted, have the right to appropriate educational programs that result in learning outcomes consistent with their abilities.... Our vision for students who are gifted is that they feel valued in a learning environment that both challenges and supports them to pursue excellence and develop a passion for lifelong learning."

(Anna Bligh, Minister for Education, in a letter accompanying the 'Framework for Gifted Education', 2004).

In order to develop appropriate strategies to cater for the needs of our identified gifted students at Indooroopilly School, we have adopted the guidelines outlined in the *Framework for Gifted Education* (2004).

Who are the gifted?

At I.S.S. we have adopted Francoys Gagne's definition of giftedness as '**... the ability to perform at a level significantly beyond what might be expected from one's age peers, in any domain of human ability. A child might be gifted in any one of the cognitive, creative, socio-affective or sensori-motor domains or in several or in all.**' (Gross,1994,p.4)

We strive to provide a variety of opportunities for our gifted students across all domains but recognise the high percentage of cognitively gifted students in our school population.

(Note: Although it is generally acknowledged that 10-15% of all people fall within the gifted range, we do believe that this percentage may be significantly higher at I.S.S. – see Appendix 1).

How do we identify our gifted students?

A combination of the following strategies and tools are used to identify cognitively gifted students:

- A range of Teacher and Parent checklists/nomination forms (see Appendix 2)
- Appropriate testing by the school-based Guidance Officer
- Teacher referrals based on informed observation and professional judgment (see Appendix 3)
- Reports from private educational psychologists provided by parents
- Standardised and other test results (Note: PM Benchmarking, Neale Analysis of Reading, Enrich-e-matics – Mathematical Thinking Ability, South Australian Spelling Test, T.O.R.C.H. tests & national academic competition results are all currently used.)

At I.S.S. we feel that it is very important to not only identify the domain/s of giftedness but also the level as the needs of our students, whether they be academic, social or emotional will vary considerably depending on where they fall on the continuum
(See Appendix 1.)

What principles apply for gifted students?

At I.S.S. we have adopted the following principles as outlined in the *Framework for Gifted Education*:

- **Equity**- All students, including students who are gifted, have the right to fair and equitable access to appropriate educational programs that meet their specific learning needs.
- **Recognition of Difference** - Students who are gifted are recognised as different from students of their own age in their speed of learning, the insightful quality of their thinking and their advanced ability in one or more areas.
- **Educational excellence** - All students, including students who are gifted, have the right to appropriate educational programs that result in learning outcomes consistent with their abilities.
- **Partnerships** - The education of students who are gifted is the shared responsibility of teachers, parents/caregivers, students and education administrators.
- **Evidence-based practices** - The schooling of students who are gifted must be informed by contemporary research-based practice and by on-going evaluation and Improvement.

What support is offered?

At I.S.S. we believe that our gifted students will have the best opportunities to realise their potential if students, teachers and parents/carers all work together and are supported. The following support is offered at our school:

For students

- Students who fall within the gifted range are identified using a comprehensive range of strategies
- The opportunity to work on an Individual Education Program developed by a team consisting of the child concerned, the child's teacher, the child's parents, the Co-ordinator for Gifted Education (CGE) and an administrator is offered
- Progress and special programs are recorded and tracked
- Opportunities to work with other identified gifted students are provided through clustering and withdrawal groups
- Support provided by the school appointed Co-ordinator for Gifted Education (CGE) who is employed currently on a one day per week basis
- Opportunities to work on a differentiated curriculum
- Opportunities to participate in a wide range of academic competitions at school, including the Australasian Tests developed at the University of New South Wales, Australian Mathematics Competitions and district Maths Team Challenges.
- Opportunities to become involved in special programs including Future Problem Solving and Australian Maths Trust activities
- Opportunities to be involved in a wide number of extra curricular activities including extensive music and sporting programs and a variety of club activities (eg Debating, Drama, Robotics & Chess Clubs)
- The opportunity to participate in an extensive school leadership program
- Provision for accelerated learning through early school entry, subject or year level acceleration (Refer to guidelines for acceleration – Appendices)
- The opportunity to be considered for school-based annual academic, sporting and social awards
- The opportunity for upper school students to work with neighbouring secondary schools, where and when appropriate

For teachers

- The on-going support of the school-based CGE to assist in a wide variety of ways including assistance in differentiating the curriculum and student support
- The provision of on-going professional development in the area of Gifted Education
- Support through the I.S.S. Special Needs Committee
- The maintenance of student records to assist teachers with identification and appropriate programming
- Information regarding conferences, workshops for teachers

For parents

- The provision of information regarding school-based, local and inter-state Parent Information sessions
- The provision of information regarding competitions and vacation workshops for students
- Access to a range of articles and educational magazines regarding giftedness

Who bears responsibility for enacting the school policy?

At I.S.S we believe that our gifted students will have the best opportunity of achieving their potential if teachers, parent/carers and school administrators and others all work together in the following ways:

Administrators' responsibilities include:

- Providing appropriate support opportunities for identified gifted students by assisting teachers to access suitable professional development and by supporting collaboration and networking within and beyond the school
- Including specific strategies regarding meeting the needs of gifted students in the school's strategic documents
- Providing support and approval for accelerations (see Appendices), where appropriate
- Enlisting specialist support staff including the school-based guidance officer and gifted education specialists

Teachers responsibilities include:

- Becoming familiar with the characteristics of giftedness through reading of the materials provided in the school-based in-service and the I.S.S. Teacher Resource Folder
- Applying appropriate methods for identifying students through discussions with the CGE and the completion of the Gifted and Talented Checklist for Teachers
- Liaising with parents/caregivers regarding student needs
- Seeking specialist advice and resources to assist in providing a curriculum that is differentiated in terms of learning experiences, teaching practices and teacher expectations so that content, learning processes and student tasks reflect different levels of knowledge, skills, interests and learning styles
- Providing curricular activities that require depth of study, complexity of thinking, fast pace of learning, high level skills development and/ or creative and critical thinking (eg through independent investigations, tiered tasks, diverse real world applications, mentors)
- Critically reflecting on our school's programs and practices in meeting the needs of gifted students
- Undertaking professional learning to enhance knowledge and skills through dialogue and the sharing of effective practices

Parents are encouraged to:

- Become familiar with the characteristics of giftedness and methods for identifying children who may be gifted
- Liaise with teachers and other school personnel to discuss their child's needs
- Become informed about options to support their child's development

At I.S.S . we believe that, by following the above guidelines, we can help achieve our vision for students who are gifted in making them' *feel valued in a learning environment which both challenges and supports them to pursue excellence and develop a passion for lifelong learning*' (Framework for Gifted Education, Queensland Government, 2004).

Appendix 2

Acceleration Guidelines

The Framework for Gifted Education also provides a clear outline for the acceleration process, which we have adapted to our situation at Indooroopilly State School.

- 1) A student is nominated by a teacher or parent. Identify student's history and profile using form A. (Appendix 4)
- 2) Deputy Principal (as Case Manager), Co-ordinator of G&T Programming and Guidance Officer gather some or all of the following information from past teachers and parents.
 - Interviews
 - reports
 - work samples
 - results of standardised tests and any other relevant information. (Appendix 5)
- 3) Evaluate the information and consider alternative courses of action.

Acceleration not required: maintain current educational program	Acceleration within year level <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum compacting• Negotiated self-paced investigations• Extra-curricular programs• mentoring	Accelerated program <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Year advancement• Subject acceleration
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References

Framework for Gifted Education.

- The Policy for the Education of Students who are Gifted
- Guidelines for Acceleration within the compulsory years of schooling
Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts

Learning Place Website www.learningplace.com.au/en/g&t

- Saylor questionnaires and Form A and B for acceleration consideration

Gifted and Talented Education Professional Development Package for Teachers Modules 1-5. Developed by GERRIC at UNSW. January 2005

Certificate of Gifted Education Course Material 2002

Gross, M. U. M.(1994) Responding to the Social and Emotional Needs of Gifted Children.
The Australian Journal of Gifted Education, Vol. 3. No. 2. Hawker Brownlow Education.