



MCSS Gifted and Talented Students Policy



Rationale and Belief Statement

Gifted and talented students have unique social, emotional, and learning needs, which should be recognised, valued and catered for appropriately. MCSS has a responsibility to educate all students to their full potential and produce high quality educational outcomes for all, including gifted and talented students. We have an obligation to provide developmentally appropriate educational provisions and strategies through differentiation, grouping, acceleration and ongoing learning experiences in a challenging and engaging environment.

Aims

The MCSS Gifted and Talented Student Policy aims:

- To align the G&T Program with ETD Strategic Plan (2014 -2017) to “increase the number of high performing students”
- To enact the ETD Gifted and Talented Students Policy 2014
- To identify gifted and talented students within the school using a range of identified subjective and objective measures
- To maximise learning outcomes for students with special abilities
- To offer a developmentally appropriate program to Gifted and Talented students
- To support gifted students as they transition from Years 5 & 6 (through the Magellan Primary Program) through to Year 12
- Engage the teachers, students, ETD and parents to work collaboratively to share the responsibility in the education of students with special abilities
- To encourage the achievement of excellence in all students
- To enable students so they are able to self manage to cope with the unique demands placed on gifted students as they achieve their potential
- To raise parent and student awareness of opportunities and challenges to students with special abilities

Definition

“Giftedness refers to a student’s outstanding natural abilities or aptitudes located in one or more domains.”

“Talent refers to a student's outstanding performance in one or more fields of human activity...”

(ETD Gifted and Talented Student Policy 2014).

Gagne's model recognises giftedness as a broad concept that encompasses various abilities including intellectual, creative, leadership, social and physical skills that places the student at the minimum in the top 10% of age peers in that domain.

"Giftedness refers to potential distinctly beyond the average for the student's age and encompasses a broad range of abilities in the intellectual, creative, socio-economic and physical domains. Talented denotes achievement distinctly beyond the average for a student's age as a result of application to training and practice" (NSWDET)

The Gifted and Talented Program at MCSS will be called the Magellan Program.
Magellan Primary School Program – will involve students in the feeder primary schools.
Magellan High School Program – will cater for students studying at years 7 – 10 level.
Magellan College Program- will cater for students studying at the year 11 and 12 level.
Students involved in any of the Magellan programs may be referred to as "Magellan Students".

Gifted and Talented may be referred to as "GAT" in this document.

Magellan Program at MCSS Years 7 to 10

Identification of Gifted and Talented Students

It is essential that identification of gifted and talented students is rigorous and transparent. The process must be justifiable and defensible and include a comprehensive range of identified tools. Consistent with the ACT Gifted and Talented Student Policy 2014, and therefore MCSS, identification is considered with reference to Gagne's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (2008). (Appendix 1)

Gifted students are found in all communities, regardless of socio-economic, cultural or ethnic background. Some students are difficult to identify, as they may be underachievers, have a disability or specific learning difficulties. Identification at MCSS will be an ongoing process and will continually evolve, recognising different levels of giftedness. It will use multiple criteria and tools appropriate to our community and population and use a range of objective and subjective measures that are culturally fair, ethical and transparent. It is important to not only identify GAT students, but to identify their level of giftedness.

MCSS may include the following tools as part of their identification process:

Objective Testing:

- OLSAT Test
- AGAT Test
- NAPLAN test
- Off level testing
- PAT Maths and PAT Reading
- Teacher developed testing
- Talent identification through performance

Subjective Testing:

- Parent checklists and nominations
- Under achievement checklists
- Teacher-Nominations and interviews
- Peer-Nominations
- Self-Nominations
- Observational and anecdotal evidence
- Rating Scales eg the Purdue Academic Rating scales
- Educational history

MCSS will follow guidelines set out in the ACT Gifted and Talented Student Policy 2014 in regard to identification. Training will be provided to staff in regard to GAT Identification and the use of a trained psychologist will be enlisted to oversee testing of students that require a specialised approach.

Gifted and Talented Identification Process at MCSS

Stage One

Testing all students on entry to MCSS – Year 6 going into Year 7, as well as Year 9 and Year 11 students to identify students who would benefit from a differentiated curriculum through:

- Objective Testing such as the OLSAT test and others as mentioned above.
- Subjective Identification: All parents or carers of entering students will have the opportunity to nominate their child for the Magellan Program.
- GAT trained teacher identified referral
- Students who enter MCSS at any time will undergo objective testing.
- Peer and or self nomination

Stage Two

Once students are identified as higher ability, further testing and nominations will continue to develop and identify their level of giftedness.

- Peer nomination, self nomination
- Talent identified through performance
- Students entered into specialised programs where appropriate and available
- Parent information evening for interested and identified students and parents
- Use of Purdue Scales

Level Three

For students identified as highly gifted or where a specialised approach is required

- ILPs
- Individual psychometric testing
- Individual parent meeting
- Support through school psychologist
- Referral for private assessment

(Adapted from Amaroo School)

MCSS has adopted a range of checklists endorsed by the ETD ACT Gifted and Talented Student Policy 2014.

Key Elements of the Magellan Program at MCSS

- **Magellan Primary Program** – prior to entering MCSS, identified and selected GAT students from partnering primary schools will be involved in an ongoing program that challenges and extends students in science and mathematics

At MCSS a multi-faceted approach will be taken for gifted and/ or talented students. These will include:

- **Differentiation** – Magellan students will be identified in their specific area of giftedness. These students will be catered for through a differentiated curriculum. Being a MYP candidate school, we have an inquiry-based learning focus, which supports differentiation in the classroom. Magellan students will be identified to staff within their class.
- **Grouping & Extension** – at regular times, Magellan students will be taken out of the normal classroom setting, and grouped with students of similar ability to undertake a challenging and educationally appropriate program to meet their specific needs. They may miss some class content but as they would have demonstrated mastery in it. What will be provided will replace the content with a more developmentally appropriate, complex and or abstract program that will provide rigorous and challenging work beyond the scope of their peers.

Passow's test of appropriate curriculum is:

1. Would all students want to be involved in such learning experiences?
2. Could all students participate in such learning experiences?
3. Should all students be expected to succeed in such learning experiences?

If the answer is yes, then the curriculum is not differentiated for the gifted.

- **School and ACT Wide Competitions** – Magellan students are encouraged to participate in a range of Academic Competitions and Challenges to extend and enrich their education such as OZCLO, Tournament of the Minds, Da Vinci Decathlon, ICAS, National Sporting Competitions, and Dance Eisteddfods etc.
- **Acceleration- within the current class. / Curriculum Compacting** – allows students to remain in the same class but accelerate through the normal curriculum, allowing them to advance in the relevant subject area.
- **Subject Acceleration** – a developmentally appropriate placement of students ahead of their chronological age or their chronological peers in one or more subjects or by one or more whole learning years.
- **ILP** – Individual Learning Plan, where the case management process recommends it or students undergo subject or whole year acceleration, when students have

identified dual exceptionalities or a parent or carer requests it and deemed appropriate. (Dual exceptionality (or twice-exceptionality) refers to gifted students who also present with one or more specific learning difficulties; physical, emotional or behavioural disabilities; or other factors which may impair performance and mask high potential.)

- [Talent Workshops](#) – specialised workshops for identified students in specialist areas (GATEWAYS, GERRIC, MCSS developed)
- [Honours Program](#) – subject specific specialisation that recognises consistent outstanding achievement and participation in extension and enrichment programs within the MCSS school community.
- [Enrichment](#) – embedded program at MCSS that provides opportunities to enhance, extend and enrich student’s education through programs run outside the normal classroom environment.
- [Independent study](#) – GAT students often achieve greater success and higher levels of engagement through the use of independent study.
- [Differentiated Homework](#) – homework can be tailored to meet the needs of the Magellan students, without increasing the burden of homework quantity.
- [Mentors](#) – where appropriate, students may be paired up with a mentor to help the student reach their potential and cope with their unique needs.
- [Graded Classes in selected subject areas](#) – Fast Pace classes are selected on past achievement, selection criteria and established potential identified through the MCSS Identification Process.
- [Head Start](#) - early entry to college. Students in Year 10 have the opportunity to begin their college entry during year 10 in a range of specialised subjects.
- [Subject specific programs](#) – may include band, musicals and performing or visual arts programs, talented athlete programs and Fast Pace classes strengthened to offer further opportunities for Magellan students

MCSS fosters collaborative home – school partnerships to identify students and meet their educational needs. An open and transparent system of identification and engagement will be communicated with parents through a special newsletter. A parent information night will also be held to discuss the MCSS Gifted and Talented Policy and Program.

Staff Responsibilities

MCSS is

- to have a recognised Gifted and Talented Liaison Officer (GATLO)
- to provide training to staff in dealing with students with special needs and special gifts
- to train staff in identification of gifted and talented students
- to prioritise training of staff in inquiry-based learning and differentiation
- to implement the MCSS GAT policy, guided by the GAT team and senior executive
- to implement testing protocols and subjective identification procedures for all students as well as training staff in the identification process.
- to create and maintain a current data database, which is user friendly and easily accessible by staff

Review process

While the GAT Policy is continually under review and can be amended at any time, the GAT team and senior executive, on a yearly basis, will conduct a basic review of the MCSS Gifted and Talented Policy.

Every three years the Gifted and Talented Policy will undergo a full review.

Measures:

The following performance indicators will be put in place:

- Student and parent surveys
- Pre and post test
- Behaviour and engagement indicators
- Objective testing
- Other as required

Appendix:

Gagne's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (2008). (Appendix 1)

Parent Checklist

Underachievement Checklist

Peer Nomination

Self Nomination

Teacher Recommendation Guideline / Checklist

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