Birchgrove Public School

"To Strive"

GATS Policy

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1. Introduction

A revised Gifted and Talented Students (GATS) Policy has been implemented at Birchgrove Public School in 2015 in accordance with the NSW Department of Education policy (2004).

This policy aims to ensure that learning outcomes for all GAT students are improved.

The policy reflects Gagné's Differentiated Model of Gifted and Talented and encourages the creation of teaching and learning programs based on identified needs that can be delivered within available school resources.

2. Policy Statement

- Birchgrove Public School (BPS) recognises and accepts its responsibility to identify GAT students in the school and to develop strategies to cater for their unique needs.

- BPS recognises and accepts its responsibility to foster collaborative home-school partnerships to support GAT students.

- The BPS school community will seek to continually develop appropriate identification procedures, provide a range of programs for its GAT students and to monitor and evaluate the successes and effectiveness of those programs.

- All teachers at BPS accept the responsibility to identify (with appropriate support structures) GAT students in their classes and to select and implement teaching strategies appropriate for inclusion in programs for any given GAT students in their classes.

3. Context

- Gifted and talented students are found in all communities regardless of their ethnic, cultural or socio-economic backgrounds. The gifted population includes students who are underachieving and who have disabilities.

- The definition that is most widely used is that of *François Gagné*. In Gagné's model, the following definitions apply:

    o **Gifted students** are those whose *potential* is distinctively above average in one or more of the following domains of human ability; intellectual, creative, social and physical.

    o **Talented students** are those whose skills are distinctly above average in one or more areas of human **performance**.

- Educational practices promoted in the field of GATS education draw on information about:

    o the nature, identification and development of giftedness and talents in the school population

    o The implementation of effective curriculum and instruction for GAT students.

4. Identification

Procedures for the identification of GAT students should come from a variety of sources. Multiple criteria needs to be used and should contain a mix of subjective and objective assessment strategies. Identification needs to be a process that involves parents/carers, students, teachers and other professionals (when needed). The identification process must:

- be school-wide

- use multiple criteria

- be inclusive

- be dynamic and continuous

- be culturally fair

- ensure that all domains of giftedness and fields of talent are identified

- recognise degrees of giftedness and talent

- be organised and linked to differentiation

- allow for early identification as well as identification at all stages

- enable input from the full range of stakeholders

    (NSW. Department of Education. Policy and implementation strategies for the education of gifted and talented students. 2004 pg8)

- For Kindergarten students please refer to the Gifted & Talented Kindergarten resource package.

Types of Identification

- The identification process is managed by the GATS Team, classroom teachers and parents.

- Identification methods need to be both *subjective* and *objective* and be selected on the basis of age/stage and, the domain of the ability to be assessed.

Subjective:	
• Teacher Nomination	• Self Nomination
• Parent/Caregiver Nomination	• Peer Nomination
Objective:	
Standardised tests	Data tracking sheets
Individual IQ	Creative tests
Extra curricular attainments	Competitions
School assessment: product/performance	

Procedures for Nominating Students

Classroom Teacher:

- Complete the Nomination by Teacher form & Observational Guide (where appropriate) (appendix 1)
- Follow the GATS Procedures and timeline (appendix 2)

Parent/Caregiver:

- Arrange an appointment with classroom teacher to discuss issues
- Request and complete relevant parent/caregiver forms for identification purposes (appendix 3)

School Counsellor:

- The school counsellor may contribute to the identification process by:
- Conducting a psychometric assessment
- Attending a L&ST/parent meeting to discuss results of testing

Student:

- Students will be invited to be part of the identification process by completing the self nomination form (appendix 4)
- Complete peer nomination form (appendix 5)

Stage Supervisors:

- Meet with class teacher to discuss whole school/stage test results of 'nominated' student.
- Attend L&ST meeting with results of assessment, if required.

GAT Committee:

- As a sub-committee of the L&ST team, the GATS committee will:
- Provide additional support material for classroom teachers (appendix 6)
- Inform staff of GATS procedures and timelines (appendix 2)

5. Register of Identified Students

- A register of students identified as gifted or talented is compiled and maintained by the GAT committee. Students will be added as they are identified and the register will be renewed annually.

- Maintenance on the register is dependent upon the recommendations of the GATS committee in consultation with the L&ST and the annual review.

- Teachers who find any student who has been placed on the register and is experiencing difficulty, or is not performing to expectations, should notify the GAT committee. The committee should then take appropriate actions to assist this student. These actions may include further assessments, referral to the School Counsellor or discussions with the L&ST.

- Parents will be involved in a review and will have the opportunity to participate in reviews and will be kept informed.

- If practicable, students identified on the register will be placed in classes where there are likeminded students or other students who are registered. Birchgrove does not have an Opportunity Class and classes will not be streamed.

6. Programs for GAT students

The GAT program is focused on the student within his/her classroom. Classroom programs are supported by whole school programs and specific options targeted at identified students. All external or specific programs operate within the resources available to the school and continuity of program delivery is dependent upon resource allocation. Individual Learning Plans will be devised by classroom teachers in consultation with the GAT committee, (as overseen by the L&ST), parents/caregivers, any specialists involved, the school counsellor and the student.

Differentiation:

Differentiation is a targeted process which involves forward planning, programming and instruction. It involves the use of teaching, learning and assessment strategies that are fair and flexible, provide an appropriate level of challenge and engage students in learning in meaningful ways. Differentiated programming recognises an interrelationship between teaching, learning and assessment that informs future teaching and learning.

Birchgrove's strategy is to adopt a variety of approaches to program modification which are qualitatively different, entailing:

- the study of more advanced concepts

- the use of higher order thinking skills (incorporating the NSW Quality Teaching model)

- teaching independent research and study skills

Differentiation can be done through:

Grouping

Group Types	Definition
Full-time ability grouping	Students are placed in selective schools (or full-time extension classes, e.g. OC classes).
Multi-age classroom	Students are grouped by achievement in a subject rather than grade/age.
Regrouping by achievement: subject instruction	Students are grouped in classes according to subject ability. This results in a flexible sorting of students enabling schools to match the curriculum with student level/ability.
Within-class performance grouping	Students are grouped by topic/subject to provide for differentiation within the classroom.
Cooperative grouping: like-ability	Groups of learners are organised in 3 or 4 member teams and group tasks are adjusted accordingly.
Withdrawal program: gifted/talented in a specific subject/area	Students are withdrawn from class regularly.

Individual Learning Programs (with individual adjustments to class programs)

- These programs can be put in place for GAT students.

- Early entry to Kindergarten based on School Counsellor assessment findings

- Acceleration in specific subjects/grades

- Curriculum contracting

- Open ended activities that promote divergent thinking and production

- Creative thinking and problem solving activities

- Research assignments

- Negotiated contracts using Bloom's Taxonomy

- Independent and group work

Whole School Programs:

Birchgrove Public School provides a range of extension and extra-curricular programs within its core curriculum. Programs include:

Extensive music programs (utilising external tutors)	Leadership Opportunities (Student Parliament, Peer Support)
Tournament of Minds	Sport (PSSA/District/Regional/State)
School Bands	Academic Competitions (UNSW tests)
Choir	Visual Arts Workshops
Dance	Chess tournaments & lunchtime groups
Debating & Public Speaking	Opportunities for performance
PEP: Peninsular Engagement Program	Premier's Spelling Bee
ICT: coding, robotics	Special interest groups

Specific Programs:

Specific programs may be utilised to extend classroom and whole school programs in particular instances. These programs operate within the resources available to the school and are implemented based on an identified need.

- Specific workshops (organisational patterns can include half day programs or full day programs and programs at other schools)
- Special events such as excursions or speakers
- Mentor programs
- Specialised subjects by distance education (usually for older students—Stage 3)
- Early entry to school
- Acceleration (vertical grouping and grade skipping)
- Gifted and talented students' camps

Early Entry into Kindergarten:

Early entry into Kindergarten is an option available to students, upon parental request, subject to certain criteria. The criteria are:

- The child is within 6 months of the approved Kindergarten entry age

- The child is identified through testing as being in the superior range of the Kindergarten cohort

- The child is well adjusted socially and emotionally

- The child is placed at the beginning of the school year

- Notification should occur by the end of Term 3 prior to placement in the following year

- The placement, if approved, will be reviewed after one term

- The process to advise the Principal of the appropriateness of such placement will include:

    o A comprehensive evaluation of the child's intellectual functioning, academic skills and social-emotional adjustment conducted by the school counsellor or registered psychologist

    o Parental input regarding the social-emotional adjustment of the child

    o A written report from the child's preschool, if the child participates in such a program

    o A meeting between the parents, the Principal and the School Counsellor will be held after the evaluation is complete to discuss the suitability of early entry.

Early Entry is a placement procedure. This placement should not be considered to be an educational program. Schools should ensure that an appropriate program is available if they decide on this type of student placement.

- Educational programs for students may contain:

- Content acceleration to match the student's abilities

- Thoughtfully planned, relevant enrichment

- Special instruction with the opportunity to work closely with other students of similar levels of ability.

Educational programs may be provided for a group of gifted students so that they study with other students of similar levels of ability.

The curriculum for gifted students should be academically rigorous, intellectually stimulating and sufficiently flexible to meet their educational, social and emotional needs. It is recommended that:

- Principals consider children aged four years or older (at January 31 of the year of enrolment) as appropriate for early entry

- Schools seek appropriate in-service training, if it is needed, for the teacher of the receiving class.

Acceleration:

"Acceleration is a set of administrative strategies that enable educators to cater efficiently and effectively for the diversity of cognitive development, needs and competencies of gifted and talented students." (NSW DET, 2004, p.8)

Two types of acceleration may be considered. They are subject acceleration (vertical grouping) and year or stage acceleration.

Accelerated progression is an option available, upon parent/caregiver or teacher referral, if the student demonstrates a level of knowledge and skills significantly above the average grade he/she desires to enter. The process for consideration for placement on an acceleration program is:

- An acceleration nomination request is received from either a parent/caregiver or teacher

- The student and parents/caregivers approve and are positive to the idea of acceleration

- In the case of grade skipping, comprehensive psychological and academic assessments are conducted

- In the case of vertical grouping, a complete academic assessment is conducted

- Teachers and parents/caregivers complete an acceleration checklist

- A meeting comprising the Principal, parents/caregivers, school counsellor, present class teacher, receiving class teacher and GATS team leader to discuss the information and options available

- Results of this meeting are discussed with the student

- If grade/stage acceleration is the preferred option, the student enters the new class on a provisional basis for one term supported by a targeted program

- The child should be placed at the beginning of the school year, or the end of Term 1 at the latest

Types of acceleration, based on recognition of readiness/superior achievement:

Acceleration Types	Definition
Early entrance to Kindergarten	The student is admitted to school prior to the age specified for normal entry; psychometric assessment required.
Year or Stage advancement	The student is moved ahead of normal stage placement.
Continuous placement	The student is given material deemed appropriate for current achievements as he or she becomes ready.
Self paced instruction	The student is given materials that allow him/her to proceed at a self-selected pace (online learning).
Subject matter acceleration	The student is placed for part of the day with students at more advanced levels.

Combined classes	The student is placed in classes where 2 or more year levels are combined to allow younger students to interact socially and with academically older students.

Types of acceleration based on the recognition of need for faster pace of learning:

Acceleration Types	Definition
Curriculum compacting	The student is given less drill and repetition and moves faster through the curriculum.
Curriculum telescoping	The student spends less time than usual in a course of study.
Mentorships	The student learns with a mentor who provides skills in a specialised area at an appropriate pace.

Acceleration allows GAT students to progress through educational programs at a faster rate than other students. It should not be confused with program modification/curriculum differentiation.

7. Giftedness and Learning Difficulties

Often referred to as Twice Multi/Exceptional, these students can often conceal their gifts and/or their difficulties. Assessment and identification procedures ensure that we recognise and provide for this group of students.

Refer to profiles (appendix 7)

8. The role of the GATS Coordinator and Team

The GATS team is a group of teachers (and parents) who support identified students and classroom teachers. The GATS team is a sub-committee of the LAST (Learning and Support Team). The role of the team is:

- Lead a committee that oversees all school GAT programs/activities (Coordinator)
- To manage the professional development of all teachers (Coordinator)
- To monitor the progress of any identified GAT students and maintain the register (Coordinator)
- To establish and maintain ongoing communication with parents, teachers and others (Coordinator)
- To provide information to the school community on opportunities for GAT students available in the community (e.g. enrichment weekends and camps, community resources, support groups, professional associations (Coordinator)
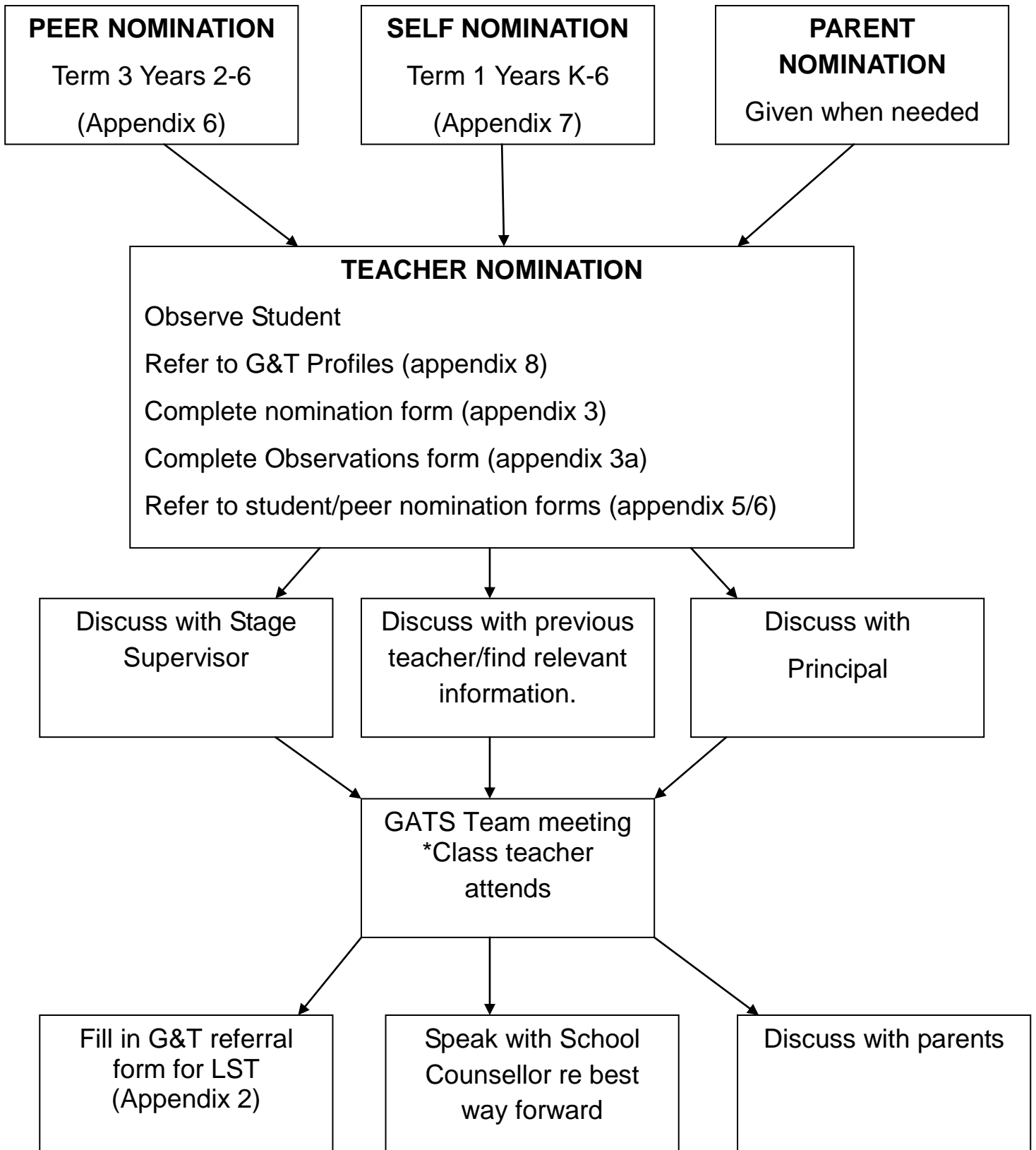
- To make available for parents reading material and information on various courses for GAT students (Coordinator)

- To continually monitor and update processes for the identification of GAT students (Team)

- To evaluate the success of the identification process (Team)

- To challenge social, gender and chronological age stereotyping and to enable our GAT students to realise their abilities to the full (Team)

- To develop and update school policy (Team)

- To identify and purchase teaching resources for GAT students (Team)

- To organise Tournament of Minds and any other suitable activities for our students (Team)

- To coordinate workshops, special events and mentor programs (Team)

<u>APPENDIX</u>

1. GATs Procedures & Timeline

2. Learning and Support Team Referral

3. Nomination by Teacher Form & Observational Guide

4. Nomination by Parent or Caregiver Form

5. Self Nomination

6. Peer Nomination

7. Profiles of the Gifted and Talented

8. Gagné's Model of Gifted and Talented

<u>NOTE:</u> To access forms please open the word document on your computer. Click on the form and the PDF will open (copies of all forms can also be found in Staff Share).

Appendix 1: GATs Procedures and Timeline

PEER NOMINATION	SELF NOMINATION	PARENT NOMINATION
Term 3 Years 2-6	Term 1 Years K-6	Given when needed
(Appendix 6)	(Appendix 7)	

TEACHER NOMINATION

Observe Student

Refer to G&T Profiles (appendix 8)

Complete nomination form (appendix 3)

Complete Observations form (appendix 3a)

Refer to student/peer nomination forms (appendix 5/6)

Discuss with Stage Supervisor	Discuss with previous teacher/find relevant information.	Discuss with Principal

GATS Team meeting
*Class teacher attends

Fill in G&T referral form for LST (Appendix 2)	Speak with School Counsellor re best way forward	Discuss with parents

Appendix 1: GATs Procedures and Timeline

Term One	Term Four
GATs Committee: • Review G&T profiles • Pass appropriate information to oncoming class teacher	**GATs Committee:** • Present identification procedures to staff • Present updated GATs policy to staff (if needed) • Collect nominations and collate • Add new information to register • Pass appropriate information on to oncoming class teacher
Class Teachers: • Review flagged students • Observe students & keep anecdotal records • Refer and use nomination sheets for students listed • Discuss with the previous teacher about what has been done to cater for the child's needs in previous year. • Administer standardised tests & collect evidence • Follow G&T flowchart (if needed)	**Class Teachers:** • Review GATS profiles • Fill in nomination forms • Fill in observational guide • Hand all paperwork to GATs committee

GATs Committee (Terms 1 to 4)

• Meetings weeks ? & ? Of each term.

• Assist staff to cater for individual students and their needs.

• Assist staff to develop ILP's (when needed).

• Organise & coordinate staff development (when needed).

• Update & renew GATs policy (when needed).

• Share & encourage the use of appropriate resources (new/existing).

Appendix 2: Learning and Support Team Referral

Learning and Support Team Referral

Student		Grade	Class
Teacher		Date	DOB
Reason for Referral		*Please indicate areas of concern below and comment*	
Social	Academic	Behavioural	Emotional	Other Additional Needs

Comment

List intervention that has occurred prior to referral

Other Relevant Information: *e.g attendance, health, speech, vision or hearing impairment and intervention)*

Student Strengths / interests

Parent Consultation: *please indicate dates, mode of communication and parent views/comments.*

Action requested from this Referral

Teacher signature:	Supervisors signature:
Date received by L&ST:	Coordinators signature:

Please attach any supporting information

Appendix 3: Nomination by Teacher Form

Nomination by teacher

Gifted and Talented Students

Appendix 3a: Observational Guide

Appendix 4: Nomination by Parent/Caregiver Form

Appendix 5: Self Nomination

Self-nomination form

Name: _____ Year: _____

If you were given the chance to meet anyone in the past or present, whom would you like most to meet and why? _____

What is your favourite subject? _____

What do you enjoy about this subject? _____

What do you like to read? e.g. books, magazines, fiction and non-fiction. _____

About how many books or magazines would you read each week? _____

When you are not at school, what do you do? _____

What sorts of things interest you? Do you know a lot about certain things? What are they? _____

Appendix 6: Peer Nomination

Nomination by peer

Name: _____ Year: _____

If astronauts were being selected on the basis that they could tell someone on another planet all about Earth, who would you nominate to go? _____

Who is the funniest person in your class? _____

If you needed help with a particular subject, who would you ask? _____

Who in your class would you ask for help if you had a personal problem? _____

Who is the best in your class at solving problems? _____

Imagine that the class was given the project of building a model of an invention. Who would you expect to build the best and most original model? _____

Which students in class can complete their work and still have time for other activities? _____

Who says the most original things in class, things that you would never have thought of? _____

If children did not have to go to school, who could still learn things? _____

Who can structure the best argument in the class? _____

Who should have the lead role in the school play? _____

If your teacher could not be in the classroom, who could take over? _____

Imagine that the school has been asked to provide a work of art for the youth centre. Who in your class should be asked to do it? _____

Who is always reading? _____

Who has a wide range of knowledge? _____

Appendix 7: Profiles of the Gifted and Talented

Revised Profiles of the Gifted & Talented

Type	Feelings & Attitudes	Behaviors	Needs	Adult/Peer Perceptions	Identification	Home Support	School Support
The Successful	Complacent Dependent Good academic self-concept Fear of failure Extrinsic motivation Self-critical Works for the grade Unsure about the future Eager for approval Entity view of intelligence	Achieves Seeks teacher approval Avoids risks Doesn't go beyond the syllabus Accepts & conforms Chooses safe activities Gets good grades Becomes a consumer of knowledge	To be challenged To see deficiencies To take risks Assertiveness skills Creativity development Incremental view of intelligence Self knowledge Independent learning skills	Liked by teachers Admired by peers Generally liked & accepted by parents Overestimate their abilities Believe they will succeed on their own	Use many multiple criteria Grades Standardized test scores Individual IQ tests Teacher nominations Parent nominations Peer nominations	Parents need to let go Independence Freedom to make choices Risk-taking experiences Allow child to be distressed Affirm child's ability to cope with challenges	Subject & grade acceleration Needs more than AP, IB & Honors Time for personal curriculum Activities that push out of comfort zone Development of independent learning skills In-Depth Studies Mentorships Cognitive Coaching Time with Intellectual Peers
The Creative	Highly creative Bored & frustrated Fluctuating self-esteem Impatient & defensive Heightened sensitivity Uncertain about social roles More psychologically vulnerable Strong motivation to follow inner convictions Wants to right wrongs High tolerance for ambiguity High Energy	Expresses impulses Challenges teacher Questions rules, policies Is honest and direct Emotionally labile May have poor self-control Creative expression Perseveres in areas of interest (passions) Stands up for convictions May be in conflict with peers	To be connected with others To learn tact, flexibility, self awareness and self control Support for creativity Contractual systems Less pressure to conform Interpersonal skills to affirm others Strategies to cope with potential psychological vulnerbilities	Not liked by teachers Viewed as rebellious Engaged in power struggle Creative Discipline problems Peers see them as entertaining Want to change them Don't view them as gifted Underestimate their success Want them to conform	Ask: In what ways is this child creative? Use domain specific, objective measures Focus on creative potential rather than achievement	Respect for their goals Tolerate higher levels of deviance Allow them to pursue interests (passions) Model appropriate behavior Family projects Communicate confidence in their abilities Affirm their strengths Recognize psychological vulnerability & intervene when necessary	Tolerance Reward new thinking Placement with appropriate teachers Direct & clear communication Give permission for feelings Domain specific training Allow nonconformity Mentorships Direct instruction in interpersonal skills Coach for deliberate practice
The Underground	Desire to belong socially Feel Unsure & Pressured Conflicted, Guilty & Insecure Unsure of their right to their emotions Diminished sense of self Ambivalent about achievement Internalize & personalize societal ambiguities & conflicts View some achievement behaviors as betrayal of their social group	Devalue, discount or deny talent Drops out of GT & advanced classes Rejects challenges Moves from one peer group to the next Not connected to the teacher or the class Unsure of direction	Freedom to make choices Conflicts to be made explicit Learn to code switch Gifted peer group network Support for abilities Role models who cross cultures Self understanding & acceptance An audience to listen to what they have to say (to be heard)	Viewed as leaders or unrecognized Seen as average & successful Perceived to be compliant Seen as quiet/shy Seen as unwilling to risk Viewed as resistant	Interviews Parent nominations Teacher nominations Be cautious with peer nominations Demonstrated performance Measures of creative potential Nonverbal measures of intelligence	Cultural Brokering Normalize their dissonance College & career planning Provide gifted role models Model lifelong learning Give freedom to make choices Normalize the experience Don't compare with siblings Provide cultural brokering Build multicultural appreciation	Frame the concepts as societal phenomena Welcoming learning environments Provide role models Help develop support groups Open discussions about class, racism, sexism Cultural Brokering Direct instruction of social skills Teach the hidden curriculum Provide college planning Discuss costs of success

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Appendix 8: Gagné's Model of Gifted and

GIFTEDNESS = top 10%

NATURAL ABILITIES (NAT)
DOMAINS

Intellectual (IG)
Fluid reasoning (induct./deduct.), cristallized verbal, spatial, memory, sense of observation, judgement, metacognition.

Creative (CG)
Inventiveness (problem-solving), imagination, originality (arts), retrieval fluency.

Socioaffective (SG)
Intelligence (perceptiveness).
Communication (empathy, tact)
Influence (leadership, persuasion).

sensoriMotor (MG)
S: visual, auditory, olfactive, etc.
M: strength, endurance, reflexes, coordination, etc.

--- CATALYSTS ---

INTRAPERSONAL (IC)

Physical: characteristics, handicaps, health, etc.
Motivation: needs, interests, values, etc
Self-management: concentration, work habits, initiative, scheduling, etc.
Personality: temperament, traits, well-being, self-awareness & esteem, adaptability, etc.

Positive/negative impacts

DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS
Informal/formal learning & practicing (LP)

Positive/negative impacts

ENVIRONMENTAL (EC)

Milieu: physical, cultural, social, familiar, etc.
Persons: parents, teachers, peers, mentors, etc.
Provisions: programs, activities, services, etc.
Events: encounters, awards, accidents, etc.

CHANCE (CH)

TALENT = top 10%

SYSTEMATICALLY DEVELOPED
SKILLS (SYDNEY)
FIELDS
(relevant to school-age youths)

Academics: language, science, humanities, etc.
Arts: visual, drama, music, etc.
Business: sales, entrepreneurship, management, etc.
Leisure: chess, video games, puzzles, etc
Social action: media, public office, etc.
Sports: individual & team
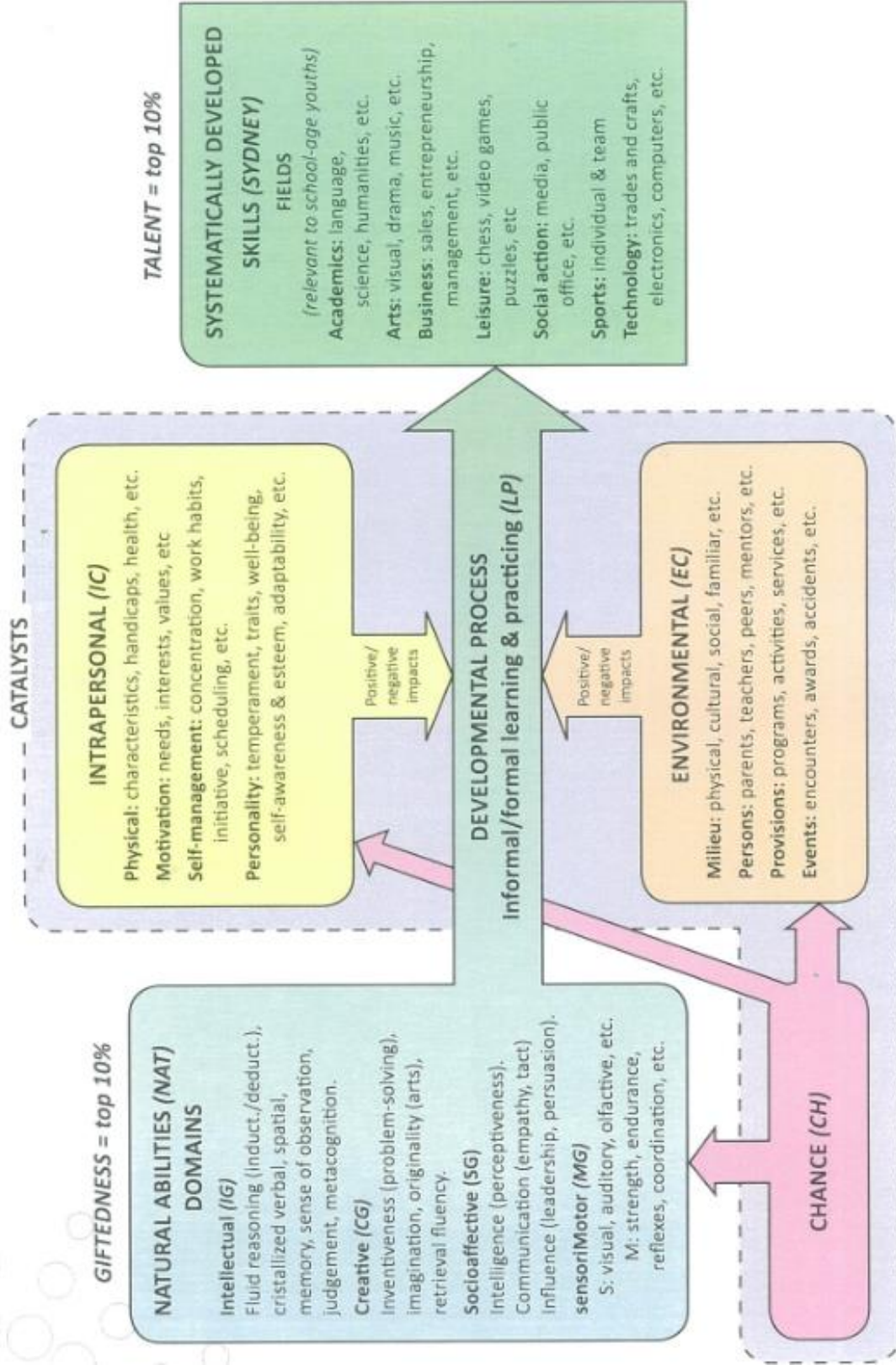Technology: trades and crafts, electronics, computers, etc.

Figure 1: Gagné's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (DMGT.EN.2K) [sic]

Appendix 8: Gagné's Model of Gifted and Talented

In Gagné's model, giftedness refers to innate ability in a domain or domains in the left of the diagram. These abilities may combine in different ways to produce one or more specific talents as displayed in the right hand side of the diagram. Therefore, high aptitude in the intellectual and creative domain may combine with the right environmental conditions to produce, for example, a mathematician or linguist.

The Gagné model illustrates that an aptitude or combination of aptitudes develops into a talent as the result of systematic training and practice. It also shows that individual behaviour and environmental factors may help or hinder the development of talent even though the child is gifted.

At the centre of his model, Gagné includes a set of 'catalysts' that are important in this regard. The catalysts include environmental factors (such as family and school), personality factors (autonomy, self-confidence, self-esteem) and motivation (initiative, interests, persistence). Gagné's theory is that these catalysts are critical in activating the transition of giftedness into talent and central to this translation, as mentioned, are the very important mediating effects of training and practice.