

Gifted and Talented Education

The Mapleton Way

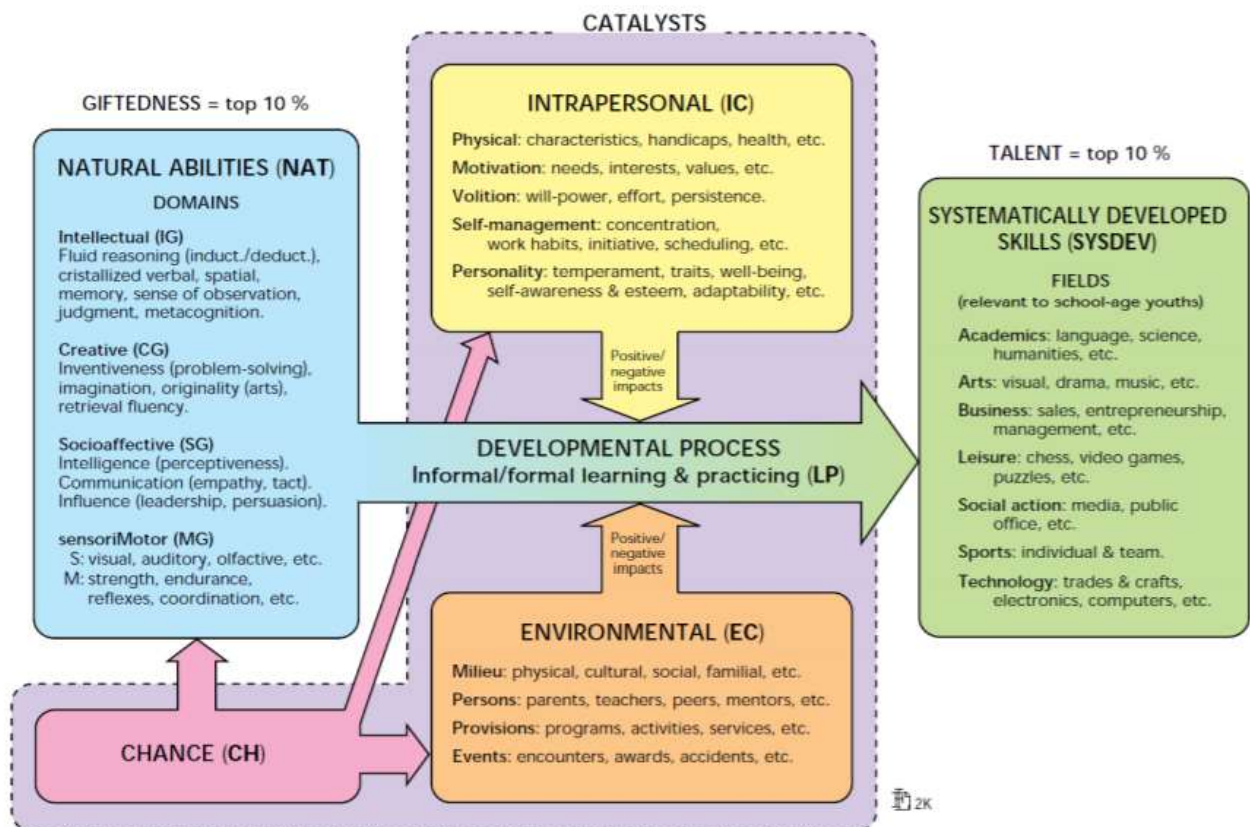
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Gifted and Talented Students at Mapleton

Mapleton State School is committed to ensuring that all children who come to our school are supported to achieve success as learners and as people. This includes children identified as gifted and/or talented. We aim to cater for the cognitive, social and emotional needs of gifted and talented children enrolled at our school. For the purposes of the Mapleton State School Gifted and Talented Program, we use the François Gagné Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent.

Gagne's Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent



Gagné differentiates between giftedness and talent by using the following definitions:

Giftedness is the possession of natural abilities or aptitudes at levels significantly beyond what is expected at one's age, in any dominion of human ability. **(Potential)**

Talent equates to high achievement. Talent is achievement or performance at a level significantly beyond what might be expected at a given age. **(Performance)**

Gagné believes that giftedness becomes talent through the quality of the child's learning through personal contexts (motivation, confidence, perseverance) and environmental contexts (surroundings, significant persons, school provisions). Our

aim is to provide educational opportunities and experiences which are particularly suited to the needs of the gifted and talented.

Who are the Gifted?

Students who are gifted excel, or are capable of excelling, in one or more areas such as:

- general intelligence,
- specific academic studies,
- visual and performing arts,
- physical ability,
- creative thinking,
- interpersonal and intrapersonal skills.

Giftedness in a student is commonly characterised by an advanced pace of learning, quality of thinking or capability for remarkably high standards of performance compared to students of the same age. Although these students are capable of outstanding achievement, the learning environment is pivotal to enabling them to demonstrate and develop their abilities. Students who are gifted are at risk of underachieving and disengaging from learning if they are not identified and catered for appropriately.

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) notes the following with regard to gifted and talented students.

Gifted and talented students vary in terms of the nature and level of their abilities; there is no single homogeneous group of gifted and talented students. Gifted and talented students:

- *vary in abilities and aptitudes — they may demonstrate gifts and talents in a single area or across a variety of domains; they may also have a disability*
- *vary in their level of giftedness — this means that two students who have gifts in the same field will not necessarily have the same abilities in that field*
- *vary in achievement — while having gifts is often associated with high achievement, achievement can and does vary across high-potential students and over time, and some gifted students underachieve and experience difficulty translating their gifts into talents*
- *are not always visible and easy to identify, and their visibility can be impacted by cultural and linguistic background, gender, language and learning difficulties, socio-economic circumstance, location, and lack of engagement in curriculum that is not matched to their abilities*
- *exhibit an almost unlimited range of personal characteristics in temperament, personality, motivation and behaviour — no standard pattern of talent exists among gifted individuals*
- *come from diverse backgrounds and are found in all cultures, socio-economic levels and geographic locations.*

Students who are identified as gifted and talented are entitled to have their intellectual, social and emotional needs catered for and supported like all other students. To be a just and equitable school, which demonstrates inclusive practices, Mapleton State School strives to offer a variety of appropriate ways of meeting the particular needs of all children. We are committed to identifying, acknowledging, supporting and affirming the giftedness or talent of identified students in our care.

Identifying the Gifted and Talented

Gifted and Talented children are represented in all socio-economic and cultural groups and are part of the population of almost all schools. They often possess particular characteristics such as a capacity to learn at faster rates, a capacity to find, solve and act on problems more readily and a capacity to manipulate abstract ideas and make connections.

Recognising, recording and responding to individual differences is an integral part of Mapleton State School's identification of Gifted and Talented Students.

The school supports the on-going program of identification, including both objective and subjective assessment procedures such as:

- Observations made by parents, teachers, peers, community members;
- Cumulative school history;
- Anecdotal records;
- Saylor Checklists;
- Interviews – parent, student and teacher;
- Curriculum based assessment tasks;
- Standardised tests of achievement and/or ability (completed at school or through an external service provider);
- Nominations – self, parent, teacher.

Usually, more than one indicator, instrument or nomination is required in identifying the ability of a child.

A student may be identified as gifted or exceptionally gifted depending on evidence gathered from the various instruments including IQ testing. The student, while not identified as Gifted and Talented, could also be identified as requiring enrichment in their learning.

The area of giftedness or talent identified could include intellectual ability in one or many areas, creative ability, sporting ability or one of the multiple intelligences including interpersonal skills as well as personality traits such as motivation. Others may be identified as requiring enrichment through differentiation of the curriculum or through participation in relevant extra-curricular activities.



What is the difference between a bright student, and a gifted student?

At times, key stakeholders may become confused as to the difference between a bright student and a gifted student. It is helpful to consider the points below in your discussions with key stakeholders.

Bright Student Gifted Learner

Knows the answers	Asks the questions
Is interested	Is highly curious
Is attentive	Is mentally and physically involved
Has good ideas	Has wild, sometimes silly ideas
Works hard	Plays around, yet tests well
Answers the questions	Discusses in detail, elaborates
Listens with interest	Shows strong feelings and opinions
Learns with ease	Already knows
6-8 repetitions for mastery	1-2 repetitions for mastery
Enjoys peers	Prefers adults
Grasps the meaning	Draws inferences
Completes assignments	Initiates projects
Is receptive	Is intense
Enjoys school	Enjoys learning
Absorbs information	Manipulates information
Good memoriser	Good guesser



Response to a Question

Characteristics of Gifted Children

The characteristics of gifted children can sometimes be seen as problem behaviour, particularly in the school setting.

Characteristic	Possible Associated Behaviours
learns quickly and easily	becomes bored and frustrated, dislikes repetition and shallow curriculum, hides abilities to gain acceptance, receives negative adult responses to smartness
exhibits verbal proficiency	dominates discussions, has difficulty with listening skills, may exhibit manipulative behaviour
has a high energy level	needs less sleep, becomes frustrated with inactivity, lack of challenge or active inquiry
exhibits heightened curiosity	takes on too many activities
extremely persistent, concentrates on tasks of high interest for extended periods	disrupts class routine, feels stifled by restrictions, resists interruption or schedules, may be perceived as stubborn or uncooperative
concerned with adult/moral issues, idealistic	attempts unrealistic reforms, feels frustrated, angry, depressed, develops a cynical attitude, receives intolerance from age peers
aims at perfection	sets unrealistically high goals, feels inadequate, feels frustrated with others, fears failure which inhibits attempts in new areas
heightened self-awareness, feelings of being different	experiences social isolation, regards differences as bad, worthless, resulting in low self esteem
highly sensitive or acutely perceptive	perceived as immature, tries to mask feelings to conform, vulnerable to criticism
responds and relates to older children and adults	experiences social isolation, seen as show off, odd, superior, critical, rejected by older children



Twice-Exceptional Students

Students who are gifted may also have a special need or disability— just as students with disabilities may also be gifted. The term “twice-exceptional,” often referred to as “2e,” is used to describe gifted children who have the characteristics of gifted students with the potential for high achievement and as well as experiencing learning difficulties or disabilities. Learning challenges may include specific learning disabilities, speech and language disorders, emotional/behavioural disorders, physical disabilities, autism spectrum, or other impairments such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

Like other gifted learners, 2e students are highly knowledgeable and talented in at least one particular domain. However, their giftedness is often overshadowed by their disabilities, or these students may be able to mask or hide their learning deficits by using their talents to compensate. Sometimes a twice-exceptional child’s special education needs are overlooked until adolescence or later, or are never identified throughout his or her life.

Twice-exceptional children often find difficulty in the school environment, where organization, participation, and long-term planning play a role. They can be highly creative, verbal, imaginative, and curious, with strong problem-solving ability, and a wide range of interests or a single, all-consuming expertise. However, at school, they may have difficulty keeping up with curriculum concepts. This often results in inconsistent academic performance, frustration, difficulties with written expression, or being identified as an underachiever who is lacking motivation. This may hinder their excitement for school and be detrimental to their self-efficacy, self-confidence, and motivation.



The Importance of Parent/Caregiver Involvement

When gathering information about a child's skills and abilities, it is essential to involve parents in the identification process if we are to gain a whole picture of the child.

Some educators may believe parents overestimate their child's abilities. However, parents of gifted young children more often underestimate their child's abilities, as they may see them as normal, compared to siblings or other family members.

In a family where children are developmentally advanced, what parents consider to be normal development may later be seen as substantially advanced when the child enrolls in school. Teachers do not see these early developmental stages. Parents are more likely to know when particular areas of strength are most evident - and this can be a very useful aid to the identification process.

To assist parents to record this valuable information, a set of questions, which allows an anecdotal example to be provided, is a most useful tool for identification. Be aware that for some cultural groups there may be reticence to nominate a child and those cultural norms may hold back or hide gifted students. This is particularly true where it is culturally inappropriate to stand out. A variety of parent checklists is available, including the one developed by Professor Michael Saylor of the University of North Texas, which is already used in a number of Australian schools. A copy of this checklist is included as an attachment in this document.



Identification of Gifted and Talented Students at Mapleton State School

Nomination of student by parent, teacher or other stakeholder

All nominations must be progressed through the Students with Additional Needs Committee (SWAN)

Information Distribution

Supply copies of Saylor's checklists, interest inventory and SWAN referral form to parents and teachers for completion

Information Collection

Develop student profile including:

- SWAN referral
- Parent and teacher checklist
- Student interest inventory (if appropriate)
- Anecdotal records
- Achievements and class tests
- Work samples
- Standardised test results
- Psychometric testing (existing)

Discussion of case at SWAN Committee Meeting

- Consider all information gathered through information collection
- Organise additional testing via school based guidance officer if required
- Identify learning outcomes and differentiation strategies required
- Negotiate course of action, timelines monitoring and review dates

Maintain current education program with appropriate curriculum differentiation strategies in place

Negotiated self-paced learning
Extra-curricular programs
Mentoring
Cluster groups

Subject acceleration

Acceleration to another grade level

Agreement

- Supports and outcomes from the SWAN committee should be documented in OneSchool either as a Personalised Learning Plan, or Individual Curriculum Plan
- Key stakeholders, including the student, if possible, should sign the prepared plan

Monitor, Review and Evaluation

- SWAN Committee/HOC to review student's progress and support the classroom teacher with differentiation strategies
- SWAN Committee to follow student's case as he/she moves between teachers

Levels of Giftedness

Mapleton State School provides a challenging and enriched curriculum to all students. This curriculum is provided to ensure the particular gifts and talents of students emerge, are recognized and developed. A range of curriculum differentiation, class, and school provisions are available to Gifted and Talented students depending on their particular area of giftedness and their level of giftedness.

Feldhusen (1993) describes levels of giftedness and possible programming options in the table below:

Levels of Giftedness	Prevalence	Programming Options
Mildly (115 – 129) (basically)	1:6 to 1:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrichment in regular classroom - Modified curriculum - Curriculum compacting
Moderately (130 – 144)	1:40 to 1:1,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advanced work - Challenges within content - Some form of ability grouping - Mentorships - Single subject acceleration - Single grade skip or early entrance to school
Highly (145 – 159)	1:1,000 to 1:10,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fast-paced content work in talent area - Ability grouping at least in talent area - Acceleration options - Challenging academic enrichments, e.g. Latin - Mentorships
Exceptionally (160 – 179)	1:10,000 to 1:1 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highly individualised programs - High school / university level programs - Advanced placement - Radical acceleration (3+ carefully spaced grade skips) - Ability grouping in specific talent areas - Specific counselling services
Profoundly (180+)	Fewer than 1:1 million	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Radical acceleration - Early admission to university - Highly individualised programs - Special program searches - Special counselling services - Ability grouping in specific talent areas

Feldhusen (1993)

Curriculum Strategies

Some curriculum adjustments and strategies considered for Gifted and Talented students or Enrichment students include, and are not limited to:

Differentiated Curriculum: Addressing the different learning styles and rates of learning of students within the classroom. Some ways of differentiating include: Content modification, process modification, product modification and learning environment.

Enrichment: Activities to broaden and develop a student's knowledge, skills, processes and experiences.

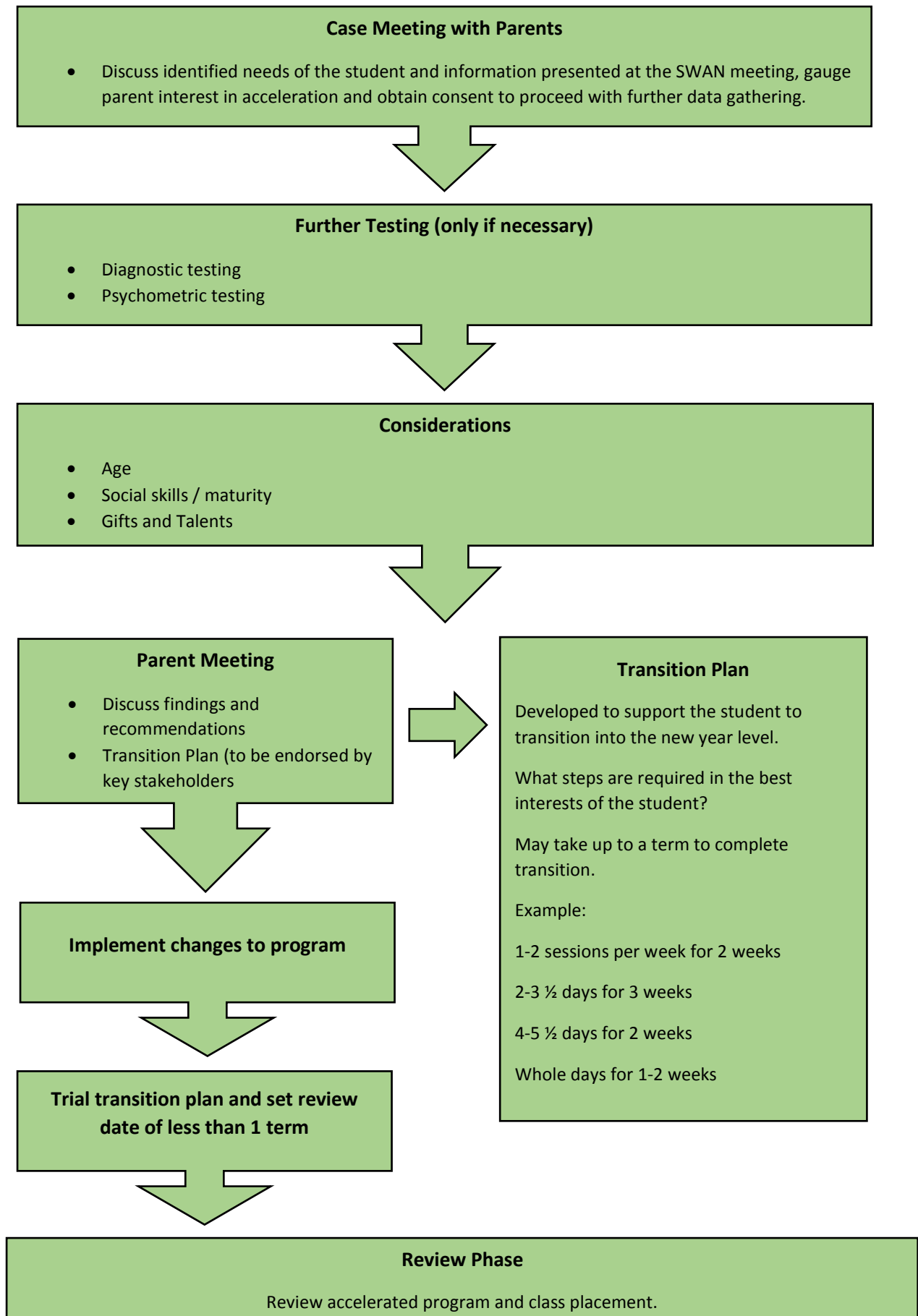
Extension: Encourages expansion of knowledge and skills in regular curriculum.

Curriculum Compacting: A process to streamline the regular curriculum. By using pre-testing to determine and excuse a student from material that is already known.

Acceleration: Relates to an advanced pace of learning. It refers to the speed and opportunity to complete work or areas of curriculum more quickly and at a higher level. In some cases, it can relate to acceleration through the grades either for particular key learning areas or for the whole Year level. The Principal will make the final decision based on data collected and recommendations made, as outlined in the flow chart on the following page.



Process for Acceleration



Checklists to Assist with Data Collection

1. [Sayler Teacher Checklist](#)
2. [Sayler Parent Checklist](#)
3. [Sayler Parent Checklist – YOUNG Children](#)

Additional Resources for Teachers

1. [Teaching Strategies 1](#)
2. [Teaching Strategies 2](#)
3. [Teaching Strategies 3](#)

Recommended Resources

[Gifted Education Research and Resource Centre](#)

[Twice Exceptional Students](#)