



School Vision

Hunter School of the Performing Arts (HSPA) provides a creative learning environment where excellence is nurtured to enable all students to perform at their best.

Context

HSPA is a K-12 public school where all students gain entry via an audition process in dance, drama, music or related area.¹ Drawing from a large geographical area, many HSPA students travel significant distances to and from school each day. HSPA offers a comprehensive curriculum with a performing arts speciality in Music, Dance and Drama. HSPA caters for a wide range of student abilities, and student interests and talents in dance, music and drama are emphasised and supported.

Rationale

Gifted and talented (GAT) students are found in all communities regardless of their ethnic, cultural or socio-economic characteristics. The needs of gifted learners encompass cognitive, affective, social, and aesthetic areas of curriculum experiences. The gifted population includes students who are underachieving and who have disabilities. Educational practices promoted in the field of gifted and talented education draw on information about: a) the nature, identification and development of giftedness and talents in the school population and b) the implementation of effective curriculum and instruction for gifted and talented students. Programs that incorporate acceleration, enrichment, grouping and counselling options best meet the needs of gifted and talented students. Curriculum experiences for gifted learners need to be thoughtfully planned, written down and incorporate explicit assessment.

Policy Statement

HSPA aims to identify gifted and talented students and to help maximise their learning outcomes by providing effective and equitable identification procedures and developmentally appropriate programs.

Definitions of Giftedness and Talent

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-emotional and physical domains. *Talent* denotes achievement distinctly beyond the average for a student's age as a result of application to training and practice.²

Identification

Students are identified using information from a variety of sources to gain a profile of the student. The identification process is school-wide, inclusive and culturally fair; uses multiple criteria to ensure that all domains of giftedness and fields of talent and the degrees of that giftedness and talent, are identified; and allows for early identification, at all stages, to enable input from the full range of stakeholders. Specialised approaches may need to be implemented to recognise giftedness and talents in some groups of students. Such students may be underachievers, have learning difficulties, disabilities or other needs. It is also recognised that identification programs need to take in to account the diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of students.

Formal methods of identification may include intelligence tests, achievement assessment or other professional reports. Informal methods of identification may include teacher or parent observation, peer or self-nomination.

Identification of gifted and talented students can occur at any time throughout the year at any level, although typically after the submission and marking of key assessments.

Programs

¹ eg. lighting and sound, theatre production

² <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/gats/PD20040051.shtml>

At HSPA, programs for gifted and talented students operate within the available resources and are implemented based on identified needs. This implementation includes a range of options for both classroom based and specialised opportunities. The timeframe of GAT program will vary depending on the nature of the program. The options may include, and are not limited to:

- Grouping or clustering of students of the same or different ages with others who have similar abilities, aptitudes and interests;
- Gifted and talented workshops;
- Mentor programs to link individual students with school or community members who have expertise in particular areas;
- Enrichment programs to provide experiences beyond the normal curriculum;
- Acceleration for students who achieve outcomes more quickly than their peers through curriculum compaction, content acceleration, partial or full grade advancement;
- Curriculum differentiation within the classroom environment;
- Specific interest groups;
- Class streaming;
- Differentiated teaching and learning programs;
- Approval of non-typical patterns of study;
- Activities beyond the classroom such as. dance, drama and music ensembles, productions and performances, specialist workshops, external competitions, regional, state and national events, and leadership development opportunities;
- Extension and enrichment activities in subject areas to develop the depth and breadth of content.

Staff Development

The Principal has a responsibility to provide opportunities for staff development in the education of gifted and talented students for teachers and other appropriate personnel. The Teaching and Learning Committee (GATS) is responsible for working collaboratively with the school community, taking account of identified teacher needs, school evaluation data and school policies. The professional learning component of the school plan is to include goals and strategies for training teachers and other school personnel in gifted and talented education.

Roles and Responsibilities

All members of the school community have a part to play in the support of the school's Gifted and Talented Education Policy, including, but not limited to the following:

The Principal has a responsibility to:

- oversee the implementation of the school's Gifted And Talented Education Policy.

The School has a responsibility to:

- identify gifted and talented students;
- foster collaborative home-school partnerships to support gifted and talented students;
- implement programs which provide a range of opportunities;
- monitor and evaluate programs for gifted and talented students;
- regularly review policies and procedures;
- notify parents/carers about their child's involvement and progress in a gifted and talented program. Students whose achievement, engagement and/or behaviour is considered unsatisfactory by the school may be removed from the GAT program.

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- help identify the gifted and talented students in their classes;
- select and implement a variety of teaching strategies for inclusion in programs for the range of gifted and talented students in their classes.

The Teaching and Learning Committee has a responsibility to:

- employ processes to access human and physical resources to support parents, teachers and students;

- monitor GAT programs;
- organise and publicise effective communication between the school and parents/carers;
- record GAT information provided by all parties.

Parents and carers have a responsibility to:

- foster collaborative home–school partnerships to support gifted and talented students;
- provide support to the school with the identification of giftedness and talent in their children;
- follow up with additional support at home for their children;
- provide information about the abilities and characteristics of their children.

Students have a responsibility to:

- actively participate and engage in the GAT program;
- maintain all other school commitments;
- communicate with their teachers and parent/carer about the GAT program;
- remain in the GAT program for its duration. Students whose achievement, engagement and/or behaviour are considered unsatisfactory by the school may be removed from the GAT program.

Definitions

Identification	Refers to the process in which multiple criteria and information from a variety of sources is used to help identify a wide range of gifted and talented students.
Differentiation	Differentiation ranges from slight to major modifications of the curriculum through adjustments to content, processes and skills. It provides a planned, documented and challenging curriculum that matches the ability of gifted students to: learn at faster rates; find, solve and act on problems more readily and; manipulate abstract ideas and make connections to an advanced degree. A differentiated curriculum is a program of activities that offers a variety of entry points for students who differ in abilities and pace of learning. In a differentiated curriculum teachers offer different approaches to what students learn (content), how students learn (process) and how students demonstrate what they have learned (product).
Enrichment	Enrichment is the provision of breadth in the curriculum at the same level of challenge to the student. Enrichment refers to the broadening of the curriculum to develop knowledge, application, thinking skills and attitudes to a degree of complexity appropriate to the students' developmental level.
Extension	Extension means providing opportunities at a greater level of challenge to the student. Extension activities involve the deepening of students' knowledge, understanding and skills.
Acceleration	An administrative strategy that allows progress through an educational program at rates faster or ages younger than normal

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy will be formally reviewed as part of the School's Management Plan review cycle.

References

DE Gifted and Talented Policy

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/gats/PD20040051.shtml>

DE Curriculum Support

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/curriculum/schools/gats/PD20040051.shtml>

Guidelines for Accelerated Progression

<http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/support/index.htm>

http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/gats/assets/pdf/accel_guide.pdf

Acceleration in Stage 6 courses

<http://ace.bostes.nsw.edu.au/ace-8043>

Acceleration in Stage 5 course

<http://ace.bostes.nsw.edu.au/ace-4028>

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