

# *Gifted and Talented Handbook*



ST ANDREWS  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

INSPIRED BY  
FAITH

DISTINGUISHED BY  
CHARACTER

LEADERS BY  
INFLUENCE



## 1. RATIONALE

St Andrews Christian College desires to provide all children access to a rich and challenging education in order to give them the opportunity to fully realise their God-given potential. The College recognises that there are students who have been blessed with gifts and talents that require enhancement and extension. In some cases, these students may also require acceleration.

## 2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We have all been uniquely created in the image of God with many gifts and talents. As a College, we aim to have every student reach this understanding.
- We aim to engage, enrich and empower our gifted and talented students to reach their fullest potential in Christ.
- We aim to provide enriching and engaging learning experiences that meet the individual needs of all students, including the Gifted and Talented. We believe that every child has the potential to glorify God with their lives and contribute meaningfully to His kingdom.
- We aim to ensure that we provide opportunities that encourages all students, including the Gifted and Talented to serve others in a way that honours God. (Eph. 4:11-13)
- We aim to ensure that Gifted and Talented Students are identified early so as to best provide programs and opportunities that are best suited to their learning needs.
- We aim to uncover the hidden potential in each child, especially those Biblical values treasured by God.

## 3. AIMS

The College aims to:

- Provide a challenging and comprehensive curriculum for all students, including those that are identified as gifted and talented.
- Encourage and inspire all students, including those identified as gifted and talented, to achieve the highest standard of which they are capable.
- Meet the needs of gifted and talented students as fully as possible through the provision of a range of programme options and extra-curricular activities.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

- A **gifted** child is one who *has the natural ability to perform* at a significantly higher level than their chronologically aged peers in any of the following areas: intellectual, creative, socio-emotional, sensory-motor or any other valid area.
- A **talented** child is one who displays *mastery* of a set of abilities or competencies in at least one endeavour. Mastery will be at a significantly higher level than their chronologically aged peers and can have been developed as a result of their learning experiences.



- A **twice-exceptional** child (or 2E child) is a child who is gifted and has another exceptionality; for instance, EAL background, learning difficulty, physical disability.
- **High Achievers** are those students who complete work to a high standard and meet all expectations and requirements. This term is often used interchangeably with Gifted and Talented but should not be confused with the natural ability.

*These above definitions reflect the distinction between ability and performance and recognise other factors in the development of a person's giftedness into talents.' (Department of Education & Australia, 2011b, p. 3)*

## 5. GIFTED AND TALENTED (G&T) STUDENTS

G&T students:

- Have been created in the image of God.
- Usually display a range of abilities or high potential that see them displaying a range of learning habits and attitudes that stand out from peers.
- Usually require differentiated educational experiences.
- Come from a range of backgrounds and experiences.
- Require understanding, patience, and creative interaction in order to have their needs met.

## 6. CHARACTERISTICS

G&T students may display (*Renzulli*):

- A range of social and emotional characteristics.
- A highly developed curiosity.
- Longer attention spans or intense concentration.
- Unusually large vocabulary and complex sentence structure for their age.
- A heightened sense of justice.
- An understanding of abstract concepts.
- A questioning nature.
- An unusual, or creative way of connecting concepts and ideas.
- A rapid recall of information.

(Renzulli, J. S. (1978). What makes giftedness? Reexamining a definition. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 60, 180-184, 261.)



## 7. IDENTIFICATION

- The College recognises that some students may already have been identified as Gifted and or Talented upon enrolment. If this is the case, any professional assessments will be presented to the College G&T Coordinator. A personal learning plan will be developed in collaboration with the classroom teacher, the parent and the G&T Coordinator.
- A variety of identification tools will be utilised to ascertain students of above average ability, which may include input from teachers, specialists, parents, peers, students and professional consultants.
- The identification tools can include:
  - Standardised testing PAT, AGAT, TORCH, NAPLAN
  - Pre Test – Post Test
  - Checklists
  - Teacher/parent nomination
- For Standardised Testing, the following strategies may be considered:
  - Students achieving in Stanine 8/9 will be Off Level Tested, i.e. they will sit the test for the next year level and continue until they have reached a level that indicates their zone of proximal development.
- IQ or cognitive assessment or other assessment as deemed necessary may be recommended by the G&T Coordinator.
- Identification decisions are based on multiple criteria. No single criterion or cut-off score is used to include or exclude a student.
- The Victorian Government Department of Education and Training (2017) also includes the following as considerations for the identification of G&T:
  - There are a number of characteristics that can signal to a professional that a young child might be gifted. There are behaviours that can be observed that indicate when a child's thinking or learning is advanced. Examples include:
    - Early development of language
    - Abstract thinking
    - Strong memory
    - A capacity to focus and concentrate on tasks of interest
    - Intellectual curiosity
    - A strong motivation to learn.



## 8. IMPLEMENTATION/STRATEGIES

- Our approach at St Andrews Christian College is to recognise that students who possess multiple abilities need to be constantly challenged and extended in the regular classroom every day of the week.
- **Specialist or withdrawal programs** are run for selected students at various times of the year.
- The College, where possible, will provide **flexible extension and enrichment programs** for gifted and talented students that may include: acceleration (subject, curriculum content, or year level), special ability groupings, out of hours programs, individual learning contracts, mentoring, classroom enrichment and extension, and the provision of varied teaching strategies (*de Bono*, *Bloom's Taxonomy*, *Gardner's Multiple Intelligences* etc.).
- Gifted student programs and **activities outside the classroom** will also be provided to enhance and extend the educational program of individual students.
- **Acceleration** is available for select students who have been identified as a minimum of two year levels ahead of their age peers. Acceleration allows for students to progress through the curriculum at a faster rate than their age peers. Some of the strategies adopted by the College can include:
  - Curriculum compacting
  - Subject acceleration — in one or more learning areas.
  - Year level skipping



## 9. GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Elements	Year Level												
	P	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Streamed Maths Classes													
Gateways Program													
Future Problem Solving													
Differentiation in class													
Accelerated Reading Program													
External Academic Competitions													
Public Speaking Competition													
Chess													
Spelling Bee													
Debating													
Mastery Classes													
Thinking Skills Lessons													
Grade Skip Acceleration													
VCE Acceleration													
Puzzle Club													
Duke of Edinburgh													
Science Talent Search													
Maths Olympiad													
Tournament of Minds													
SOAR- Student Opportunities that are Academically Rewarding													
University Competitions													
Code Masters Computer Programing Challenge													
Programming Challenge for Girls													
National History Challenge													
Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program													



## 10. OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED EXPLAINED

- **Streamed Mathematics classes:** The Maths classes from Year 2 to 6 are streamed across the College. This is a unique program that allows for students to complete the Maths program at a level suitable to their needs. Every student sits an annual standardised test that tracks their growth and achievement level. This data, along with classroom assessments, are used to form the Maths classes from Year 2 to 6. Students who have been identified as at least 1 year level ahead are extended the opportunity to be accelerated into the next year level. As students progress from Year 7 there are a range of possible Maths pathways that they are able to follow. More explanation of these can be obtained from the College.
- **Gateways:** The Victorian Association of Gifted and Talented Children runs the Gateways programs that consist of a range of programs that cater for gifted and talented students. These programs are usually held in a number of locations around the State and are either school or parent nominated. If you would like to receive information regarding the Gateways programs, please send an email to [mbrewer@standrews.vic.edu.au](mailto:mbrewer@standrews.vic.edu.au) with Gateways in the subject line. More details regarding the criteria and range of activities offered can be found at: <http://www.gateways.edu.au/>
- **Future Problem Solving:** The program focuses on the development of critical, creative and futuristic thinking skills. “The program challenges students to apply their minds to some of the significant issues facing the world of today and the future, equipping them with the vision, skills and tools to design and promote positive futures for the society in which they live.” (FPS Website) At St Andrews, teams of 6 to 8 students are formed and will participate in practice challenges. Successful teams are entered into the finals which are held each October.
- **Accelerated Reading Program:** (AR’s) Students undertake a personalised reading program that tracks progress and enhances comprehension.
- **Academic Competitions:**
  - ICAS English Competition, ICAS Science Competition, ICAS Computing Competition, ICAS Spelling Competition which are organised by the University of NSW.
  - Australian Geography Competition which is run by The Royal Geography Society of Queensland and The Australian Geography Teachers Association.
  - Australian Maths Competition which is organised by the Australian Mathematics Trust.
- **Public Speaking Competition:** This is a bi-annual competition that is run across the College. Students are selected from each section of the School to present a speech on a preselected topic with the best speech awarded to Junior, Middle and Senior students.
- **Chess:** This activity is usually run after school, one afternoon a week. Students are also selected to compete in local and state chess championships.
- **Spelling Bee:** This is a College competition that involves students from Prep to Year 8. Students are provided with the opportunity to work through a series of spelling challenges in order to determine the spelling champion.



- **Debating:** Selected students are able to participate in interschool and local community debating competitions.
- **Mastery Classes:** Usually held during the last week of each term. Selected students will focus on engaging in a small group activity based on a particular interest area. These groups are withdrawn from class and will work collaboratively to solve problems and learn new skills. Mastery Classes can include such topics as Coding, Creative and Critical Thinking, Economics, Philosophy, Technology, Construction or Game Making.
- **Thinking Skills Lessons:** Classes are held weekly throughout the Junior School where students encounter a range of thinking challenges and topics to engage their creativity and lateral thinking.
- **Puzzle Club:** This club is run during lunch times and caters for students from Years P to 4.
- **Science Talent Search:** This is an annual Science competition that is open to each section of the College. Students enter artefacts such as posters, games, videos, models and inventions.
- **Tournament of Minds:** Students work in teams to solve problems that cover a range of topics including Science, Engineering and Literature. This is a national, inter-school competition that is run annually.
- **SOAR:** Student Opportunities that are Academically Rewarding. This is a holiday program that is held at Chairo Christian School, Pakenham. This program provides workshops that have been specifically designed to cater for extension activities to challenge participants to inspire them to think creatively and to develop skills and attitudes that will help them to reach their God-given potential.
- **University Competitions:** Throughout the year, some of the Universities offer competitions that covers a range of topics and subject areas that allow for extension opportunities. A number of these competitions are offered to students as they become available.
- **Code Masters:** The annual Code Masters Computer Programming Challenge competition is an open coding contest for high school students from across Australia. It is offered by The University of Melbourne School of Engineering and it is an opportunity for students to explore their interest and passion in IT and Programming. There are two divisions in this competition: the junior division (years 7–9) and the senior division (years 10–12) and is held both on-campus and online. Teams consist of two or three students and they solve 8 computer programming problems in 2.5 hours.
- **National History Challenge:** Students are encouraged to research a topic that is related to world history. This competition awards deep and broad research, along with creative presentation.
- **Kong Lee Dow Young Scholar Program:** This is an enrichment program that is run by Melbourne University. Recipients of this award can take part in a range of activities and events conducted by the University of Melbourne. Recipients are also eligible for the Global Scholars Award that includes a scholarship of up to \$2,500.
- **Sport:** A range of sports are offered from which students can choose. These may include netball, basketball, athletics club and soccer.
- **Art:** Art Exhibitions, Art Week, Lunchtime Art Program.
- **Languages:** Students from Years 7 to 10 can choose to be involved in the Australian Language Certificate Competition. Duolingo, which is an online Language learning program in which students progress at their own rate, is used for students from Years 5 to 8.



- **Instrumental Music** All students are offered the opportunity to learn a musical instrument in school time on a class withdrawal basis. Lessons are offered and taught by instrumental teachers who specialise in the various instruments. Instrumental music is offered in brass, percussion, strings, voice and guitar. Students in Year 5 are provided with an instrument for the year and they are expected to learn and practice this instrument and join at least one ensemble or band.
- **Drama Productions** The College stages productions that cater for a range of year levels. Major musical productions are run every second year and allow students the opportunity to perform on stage and assist with stage managing, technical areas, costumes and dance. Plays are staged in alternate years, giving students further opportunities on and off stage. The College participates in an inter-school Theatresports Sports Competition each year.

## 11. RESOURCES

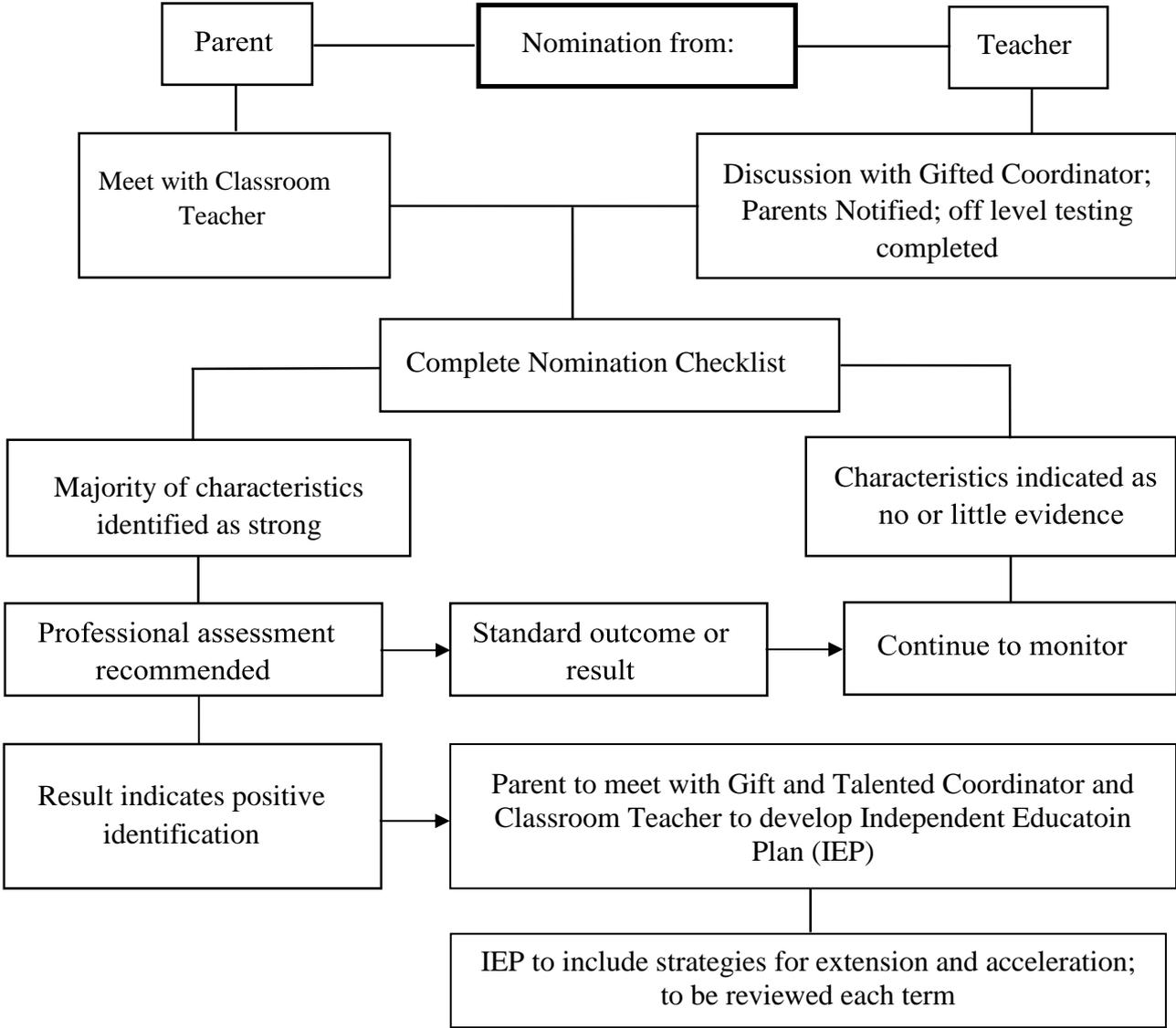
- Parenting: <http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/parenting.htm>
- <https://www.vagtc.org.au/>
- <https://www.nagc.org/>

## 12. APPENDIX

- Identification Process Flow Chart
- Identification Checklist

## Identification of Gifted Students

This flow chart outlines the identification process of the Gifted and Talented. Nominations may be from Parent or Teacher.





### Gifted and Talented Checklist – Parent Nomination

Parents: Fill out this form and hand it to your child’s teacher.

**Name:**

**Birthdate:**

**Year Level:**

The following outlines some characteristics of gifted children. Each child is different and may display a range of characteristics but not all of them. Using the 5 point scale below to indicate the degree to which the child displays the characteristic, with 1 being no evidence to 5 being strongly displays. If you are unsure or have not seen any display, please tick the NE column for no evidence.

	N/E	1	2	3	4	5
Walked early						
Learned to read early						
Uses advanced language and vocabulary						
Is able to quickly recall large amounts of information						
Displays intense interest when learning new things						
Is creative						
Is able to make abstract connections						
Displays a strong sense of justice						
Enjoys complex games						
Likes to know how things work						
Continually asks probing questions						
Displays empathy						
Is highly sensitive to the distress of others						
Is able to read body language and gauge emotions						

Does your child exceed in any academic area/s or display any special talents?

Please provide personal examples where possible:



ST ANDREWS  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE