RATIONALE

The students at Our Lady’s school exhibit diversity in their abilities and talents. It is important for the teachers to be prepared with strategies and resources to work with these students in the mainstream classroom.

Giftedness can be defined as ‘the potential to perform at a level significantly beyond what may be expected from one’s age peers in any area of human ability. It is important to note that a student may be gifted in any one of the cognitive, creative, socio-affective or sensory-motor domains, or several, or in all, or in an area not categorised by domains.’ (Gagne, 2002, p 60-74)

Talent, then, is ‘an achievement beyond what might be expected from age peers in fields such as arts, technology, sports and social action. Therefore, a student can be gifted without being talented.’ (Gagne, 2002, p.60 -74)

Gifted

- Gifted individuals possess outstanding natural intellectual, physical, creative or social abilities.
- Importantly, gifted children and young people may or may not be high achievers – while they may have outstanding potential they can be disengaged and under-achieve.
- While all gifted individuals have the potential to perform at a significantly higher level than their age-peers, their level of ability may be considered on a scale of mildly to extremely gifted.
- Around 10-15% of people may fall within the full range of gifted abilities, however high to extreme levels of giftedness are only prevalent in a very small proportion of the population (1-2%).

Talent

Talented individuals are those who demonstrate outstanding mastery of systematically developed knowledge and skills in one or more areas. They typically develop these competencies through practice and are usually highly motivated and persistent in their endeavours. (Victoria Education and Training)

The key to this definition is that it distinguishes between outstanding potential (giftedness) and outstanding performance (talent). (Understanding Gifted and Talented Learning. Dr John Munro).

AIMS

- To identify students with high academic potential.
- To utilise a range of approaches, strategies and learning opportunities to support students identified as being gifted and talented.
Our Lady of Perpetual Help – Ringwood

- To evaluate the most appropriate mainstream classroom procedures and strategies that will maximise the learning opportunities.

- To facilitate the development of higher order thinking skills and higher levels of thinking.

- To ensure that where a student is identified as being gifted parents, the teachers and (if required) outside agencies have regular Program Support Group (PSG) meetings to discuss student progress, short and long term goals and future direction.

IMPLEMENTATION

- A variety of identification tools will be employed to identify students who maybe considered gifted and or talented. This may involve input from teachers, parents, peers and professional consultants. This includes the identification of students preferred learning styles through surveys and other informal methods.

- Provide a learning environment that is supportive, challenging and responds to the student’s individual strengths and interests.

- Planning a differentiated curriculum that offers a variety of entry points for learners who differ in abilities, knowledge and skills and allows them to progress through it at a rate that matches their learning.

- Gifted and talented students differ from their age-peers not only in terms of their abilities, but in their preferred learning style as well. They have particular learning needs that require specific strategies and approaches that include, but are not limited to:
  - daily learning experiences that reflect a range of learning styles
  - opportunities to socialise and learn with peers of like-ability as well as work independently on areas of interest
  - connections to people and opportunities beyond the classroom or school that support their particular passions and talents while connecting to the curriculum (Rogers, 2007).

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year cycle.