

Gifted and Talented Program

The Gifted and Talented Program at St John Bosco College is designed to enable students with a special gift or talent the opportunity to attain their full potential. This Program comprises both the Newman Program (for Year 7 and 8 students) and the Gifted Opportunities and Accelerated Learning (G.O.A.L.) Program (for Year 9-10 students). Both Programs differentiate the curriculum so as to stimulate the interests and abilities of the gifted and/or talented students who are selected. They aim to create a challenging learning environment that encourages students to engage their abilities to the greatest possible extent, promote creativity and higher cognitive skills, and prevent student under-achievement.

The Gifted and Talented Program at St John Bosco College reflects the following beliefs:

- the needs of gifted learners encompass cognitive, physical, affective, social, and aesthetic areas of curriculum experiences
- gifted students are best served by a curriculum that incorporates both accelerated and enriched learning
- curriculum experiences for gifted learners need to be thoughtfully planned, written down and incorporate explicit assessment. (Van Tassel-Baska, 2003)
- opportunities for gifted students should include a variety of individual and group interventions specifically targeted at talent development (Gagné, 2003).
- grouping, differentiation and accelerative practices are interdependent and central to maximising learning outcomes for gifted students.
- a program is a “comprehensive, sequential system for educating students with identifiable needs” (Berger, 1991).

Goals of the Program:

- to provide an educational environment that fosters able students developing to their full potential
- to provide qualitatively not quantitatively different education that provides for the intellectual, psychological and social needs of gifted children.

Objectives of the Program:

- to provide extension of the content taught within the KLAs at a pace and depth appropriate to the capacities of able learners
- to develop high-level written and oral skills
- to develop and apply sophisticated research skills and methods
- to provide an environment that encourages divergent thinking
- to promote a multidisciplinary approach to studies that more adequately caters for the diverse learning styles of able children
- to promote critical thinking and reasoning abilities
- to provide a supportive learning environment for like-ability students
- to develop self understanding and metacognition
- to provide enrichment tailored to the needs and interests of able children

- to provide appropriate opportunities for small-group discussions with like-ability students
- to promote independent investigations of real world problems with a real audience.

Identification

The identification of Gifted and Talented students is based upon formal and informal measures, obtained from many sources and settings, to identify students as early as possible. This process includes procedures for identifying student who demonstrate, or have the potential to demonstrate, exceptional performance in one or more talent areas.

Identification measures include: teacher and/or parent referral forms; formal measures (group standardized); informal measures (past and present classroom performance ratings, anecdotal information, portfolio documenting the student's strengths). A wide variety of methods are used including psychometric test results, Checklist of Learning and Behavioural Characteristics and the Bright Child Gifted Learner Checklist by Janice Szabos, primary school recommendations, Allwell testing, NAPLAN and PAT Test results, Ravens and/or Slossen testing, subject specific competitions, College assessment tasks, parent nomination, etc.

Identification of students for both the Newman and GOAL Programs takes into account the possibility of diverse learners who are twice exceptional (2e) due to a socio-emotional, cognitive (such as dyslexia), psychological (such as autism) or physical disability (such as a hearing impairment). Psychometric testing is often recommended for these students as the gift or the disability may mask the appearance of the other. Once a 2e student has been identified, there is generally additional collaboration and communication between the College, parents and College counsellor to address these diverse needs and ensure that the student is given the opportunity for their gift to be transformed into a talent. Even if the student is underachieving due to a continued discrepancy between ability and performance, every endeavour will be made for that student to continue working with like ability peers and their needs to be addressed.

Program Provisions

- Differentiation - modifying content or subject matter, processes or thinking skills, and/or products or results of learning to meet the educational needs of the students. This includes:
 - Presenting content that is related to broad-based issues, themes or problems
 - Integrating multiple disciplines into the area of study
 - Presenting comprehensive, related and mutually reinforcing experiences within an area of study
 - Allowing for the in-depth learning of a self-selected topic within the area of study
 - Developing independent or self-directed study skills
 - Developing productive, complex, abstract and/or higher-level thinking skills
 - Focusing on open-ended tasks
 - Developing research skills and methods
 - Integrating basic skills and higher level thinking skills into the curriculum

- Encouraging the development of products that challenge existing ideas and produce “new” ideas
- Encouraging the development of products that use new techniques, materials and forms
- Encouraging the development of self-understanding, i.e., recognizing and using one’s abilities, becoming self-directed, appreciating likenesses and differences between one’s self and others
- Evaluating student outcomes by using appropriate and specific criteria through self-appraisal, criterion referenced and/or standardized instruments.

(Source: National/State Leadership Training Institute on the Gifted and the Talented Curriculum Committee (1979). James J. Gallagher, Sandra N. Kaplan, A. Harry Passow, Joseph S. Renzulli, Irving S. Sato, Dorothy A. Sisk, and Janice Wickless.)

(Note: When necessary, additional methods of differentiation will be adopted to meet the needs of individual students with physical disabilities so that they are not disadvantaged.)

- Enrichment - both curricular modification and the provision of challenging educational experiences to provide appropriate and flexible educational opportunities. These include:
 - Mentorships—A program that pairs individual students with someone who has advanced skills and experiences in a particular discipline and can serve as a guide, advisor, counselor and role model.
 - Independent Project—Research and development of self-selected topic.
 - Holiday Enrichment Program—Enrichment classes or courses offered during the holiday months by local universities.
 - Competitions—Organized opportunities for students to enter local, regional, state or national contests in a variety of areas.
 - Withdrawal—Students are released from their regular classroom on a scheduled basis to work on rigorous content and/or at a pace appropriate for Gifted and Talented students with a teacher trained in the education of the gifted.
 - Interdisciplinary Studies—Withdrawal classes that provide opportunities for the acquisition of a broad base of knowledge as content is organized around themes, broad-based issues and/or problems.
 - Flexible pacing through either curriculum compacting, acceleration, cross-grade grouping or Individual Education Plans.

- Grouping - students who are part of either the Newman or the GOAL Program are grouped with like ability peers. Within the Newman Program this takes the form of the Newman class, which is the more academically gifted and/or talented students who remain together for English, HSIE, Science and Religion. There is a separate Newman Maths class for the more mathematically gifted and/or talented students.

For students on the GOAL Program, they may be part of the Challenge Class (similar to the Newman class) but they will also be withdrawn to work with like ability peers on challenging activities. This flexible grouping allows for small groups from the same

year group or multiple year groups to work together, and for single students to work alone on a personal interest project.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the Program and its objectives, goals and provisions occurs both informally and formally on a regular basis. This takes the form of feedback to students, teachers, administrators and parents, and includes parent-teacher conferences, discussions with individual staff and students, and student evaluation of the program, learning environment and their progress. Additionally, documentation such as newsletters and the College Yearbook provides data to the College community about the program's impact and role. Ongoing evaluation is essential to ensure that the Program's goals and performance are in accordance and to improve program practice and student performance.

Appendix

Peer Nomination Form

Self Nomination Form

Teacher Nomination Form

Parent Nomination Form

Student Evaluation of Course

Student Evaluation of Program

GOAL/NEWMAN - PEER NOMINATION FORM

Please write down the names of the classmates whom you would pick for the following:

1.	Who seems to know the most about a lot of different things?	
2.	If you needed help in maths, whom would you ask?	
3.	If you were lost in a strange place, who would be the best at figuring out what to do?	
4.	Who usually knows the meanings of a lot of big words?	
5.	Who knows the most about scientific things?	
6.	Who would you pick to work with you on a social studies/HSIE project?	
7.	Who should be class leader because he or she usually gets everyone together and gets things done?	
8.	Who would be best at reading an exciting mystery story to the class?	
9.	Who would you choose to represent your class in a debating competition?	
10.	Who in your class would you call your best friend?	

GOAL/NEWMAN - SELF-NOMINATION FORM

Student Name _____

Year _____

1. What is your easiest subject in school?

2. What subject is most difficult for you?

3. Which subject do you most enjoy?

4. Do you like to work alone or with others? Why?

5. What do you like to do most in your free time?

6. Do you take any private lessons?

7. What programs do you watch on television?

8. What kinds of books do you enjoy reading?

9. Do you have a favorite book?

10. What do you want to be when you grow up?

11. Describe the G/T Program as you understand it.

12. Why would you like to be a part of this program?

13. Describe yourself as a student.

GOAL - TEACHER NOMINATION LETTER

Dear Colleague,

I want to identify any gifted and/or talented students who have not previously been nominated and I need your help! Could you please provide the name of any student who “strikes” you as being very able and perhaps requires more challenge than the regular course provides.

To help this selection process, please refer to the checklist below. However, the student does not have to be achieving to have ability and be eligible for the program! Nominate any student who may be gifted/talented - do not assume someone else has already nominated them!

Thank you for your continuing help and support!

Stephanie McVey.

Name of nominating teacher:

STUDENT NAME	YEAR	SUBJECT	COMMENTS (if necessary)

- learns basic skills easily, readily and with few repetitions
- uses vocabulary that is superior in both quality and quantity
- memorises and retrieves information easily and quickly
- possesses unusual imagination and/or creativity
- demonstrates a keen sense of humour
- shows a preference for individual work
- demonstrates a longer attention span enabling concentration and perseverance in solving problems and pursuing interests
- displays great intellectual curiosity and inquisitiveness
- likes to create, invent, investigate and conceptualise.

However, they may also display some of the following:

- gets bored easily, resists drill, disturbs others, daydreams
- impolitely corrects or lacks respect for adult arguments
- has few friends, nonconforming, impatient with others
- dislikes group work, may monopolise discussions
- sense of humour may be used inappropriately
- can be reluctant to do written work
- appears inattentive, then copes easily with work
- can be overly sensitive to criticism
- show perfectionism constantly.

GOAL/Newman - Parent Nomination Form

Student Name _____ Year _____

Pastoral Class _____ Pastoral Teacher _____

Please indicate “yes” or “no” to each item and add comments where possible.

	Yes	No	Comments
Learns rapidly and easily			
Applies knowledge from one situation to another			
Retains knowledge without rote drill			
Uses an extensive vocabulary			
Reads books that are above year level			
Wants to know the causes or reasons for things			
Does academic work about year level			
Understands abstract concepts			
Independently explores areas of interest			
Has perseverance			
Independently writes stories poems or plays			
Willing to try different methods when solving problems			
Evaluates own work			
Creates new ideas through writing, speaking or playing			
Invents things on own			

(Adapted from Renzulli Scales)

STUDENT EVALUATION OF GOAL
/NEWMAN COURSE

Name of Course: _____

1. What did you hope to achieve/experience in this course?

2. What expectations were met?

3. Which weren't? What was the cause of this?

4. Did you enjoy this course? Why or why not?

5. What changes would you suggest to improve the course?

6. Is this a course you would like to repeat? Why?

STUDENT EVALUATION OF GOAL/NEWMAN COURSE

1. What did you hope to achieve/experience in this course?

2. What expectations were met?

3. Which expectations weren't met? What was the cause of this?

4. Did you enjoy this course? Why or why not?

5. What changes would you suggest to improve the course?

6. Is this a course you would like to repeat but with an extension of the content/skills/scope of the course? Why?

STUDENT EVALUATION OF GOAL/NEWMAN PROGRAM

1. Would you prefer to be withdrawn from class to participate in an Extension/Enrichment course as part of a group or would you prefer to do different work in the classroom as an individual? Why?

2. If you were doing different work in the classroom, would you prefer to work on your own or be able to discuss the work with the Gifted and Talented Coordinator and /or class teacher? Why?

3. Which of the following would you like as an acknowledgement of your participation in the Gifted and Talented Program: (tick as many as you like)

nothing	merit	certificate
recorded on report	called up at year assembly	
called up at school assembly	other (specify)	
GOAL/NEWMAN Graduation		

4. What type of course would you like to see become part of the Gifted and Talented Program? Consider type of unit or way in which it is presented.

5. Are there any negative aspects to being on the Gifted and Talented Program? Can you suggest any solutions to these problems?
