

G.A.T.E

Contributed by Administrator
Last Updated Wednesday, 04 November 2009

The GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) Program

PROVISIONS FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS AT COCKLE BAY SCHOOL

1. School Philosophy

The school has a genuine commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students. The school's Board of Trustees, the Principal and staff actively support the school's philosophies for gifted and talented students.

2. School Management and Organisation

Within the school's management structure, the Deputy Principal (also Senior School Dean) has the designated responsibility for co-ordinating provisions for the gifted and talented students.

Cockle Bay School (CBS) has a team approach towards all aspects of the development and implementation for gifted and talented students, guided by our school's existing policy.

The Senior leadership team have co-ordinated the new initiatives for GATE in 2004 and the GATE co-ordinator has worked closely with the Assistant Principal (also Junior School Dean) and the Middle School Dean, in developing programmes for these identified students in our school.

Our school employs a continuum of delivery approaches to cater for our gifted and talented students. We encourage a differentiated curriculum delivery in all classrooms, so that teachers can address the needs of individual students. We have also implemented for 2004 a spiral of thinking skills to support our teaching and learning programmes at Cockle Bay School.

Provisions for gifted and talented students receive equitable funding within our school. In 2004 all Deans were timetabled to work for one day, each week with identified students providing a programme of work that had strong links to the students' class topics and also focussed on the explicit teaching of thinking skills.

3. School Policy

The school has a policy and implementation plan to meet the needs of gifted and talented students that is readily available to parents, guardians and staff.

The school undertakes regular reviews of its provisions for gifted and talented students that include consultation with team leaders, classroom teachers, parents/guardians and students. We have also been involved in the 3 year GATE, (Gifted Edge) Ministry of Education contract since February 2003. The Deans and some class teachers have participated in this.

Cockle Bay School has a multi-categorical definition of giftedness that reflects contemporary ideas and that recognises cultural perspectives. The Renzulli model and Gagné's model, have been our guiding references for the past two years. We pride ourselves on a holistic view of student development and learning. Our classroom teachers provide a responsive environment approach.

Cockle Bay School has effective procedures in place to identify the support and resources required for gifted and talented students. The Board of trustees and principal have been supportive of the budget requested for the purchase of numerous, up to date resources for our teachers and students, and also for professional development funding. This has been a key to the success of our GATE programmes and developments.

4. Identification and Assessment

Gifted and talented students are systematically identified by the school on the basis of valid assessment data that draws upon information from a range of sources.

We are aware of variables, so that any bias can be ruled out eg, culture, socio-economic, gender, disability, etc. The school adopts a consistent approach towards monitoring and recording the achievement of our GATE students in all areas of the curriculum. The school utilises a range of methods to evaluate programmes that lead to improved learning outcomes for gifted and talented students, (refer to school wide, assessment clear file).

5. Professional Development

As already stated the GATE co-ordinator and Deans have received appropriate, on-going professional development by way of the GATE contract and also conference and course attendance relevant to this area.

Professional development for staff has included some staff attending the contract days and also CBS staff meetings and teacher only days with focuses on GATE, curriculum differentiation and thinking skills.

6. Curriculum Delivery

CBS recognises that gifted and talented students have special learning needs and characteristics that require differentiated programmes. The Deans and the teachers at CBS are committed to planning and implementing appropriate programmes to meet the needs of these students. We employ flexible grouping procedures to provide regular opportunities for gifted and talented students to work with other students of like minds who have similar needs and abilities.

Programmes for the gifted and talented students in our school have clearly defined goals and objectives that are regularly reviewed and evaluated, by class teachers, Team Leaders, and the deans.

We have had a wonderful response from our parent community this year. We have held regular term meetings with our parents (of students in our one day class) on developments in our CBS gifted and talented programmes and also national and international developments. We have also shared this information with the PTA and also at the initial parent meetings at the beginning of the year. These meetings have been well received. Our one day classes have accessed many experts from our community to provide extra rigour to our programmes.

7. Liaison with outside agencies

CBS is up to date with National and International research and GATE initiatives. We actively seek support when required from our outside agencies. Rosemary Cathcart, Sonia White and Sue Barriball from the George Parkin Centre and Team Solutions have provided advice when required. We have a sharing and positive relationship with this team. They have been delighted in our GATE developments at Cockle Bay School. The Correspondence School have supported one of our Year 3 students in Mathematics this year as a dual enrolment student. This has been an excellent partnership for this student.

Our local Intermediate schools, Sommerville, Howick and St. Kentigerns and also Howick College have been regularly consulted, with regards to our initiatives and provisions for our gifted and talented students. We have engaged in a local schools group Ministry of Education, 2 day course for Assessment where the key focus was the sharing of information between schools and the importance of this, for all students' well being.

8. Where to from here?

For 2005 the Board of Trustees, Principal, teachers and PTA have supported the concept of a 'Lead Class' in each year group, from years 2 to 6.

The rationale for this 'Lead Class' is for identified students to be placed in a learning environment with 'like minded' students. These students may well be the gifted and talented students as well as our underachievers who have yet to reach their true potential.

The class would be part of the regular, year group teams, but their differentiated curriculum would have a greater emphasis on higher order thinking skills so as to meet the individual needs of the students. The Dean would be scheduled for two, ninety-minute blocks of time each week to support the students and teacher in the lead class. The Dean may also be used to support specific students in other classes within the team who have not for various reasons been placed in the lead class.

The teacher selected for this class will need to be...

•willing to work with the Dean very closely in their classroom

- an experienced teacher of that particular year group or have had success with implementing GATE programmes within their classroom
- have an in depth understanding of what it means to differentiate the curriculum for gifted and talented students
- passionate about teaching the gifted and talented
- prepared to learn and engage in professional development during the term and in the school holidays
- able to support the GATE project team to professionally develop our whole staff
- educate, communicate with our parent community at regular information evenings that will be scheduled throughout the year
- consider a GATE university paper to support their professional development
- have high expectations of all students
- ICT literate

In considering the above criteria the Leadership team have opted to have our Team Leaders as the lead class teacher for 2005.

The student selection for this class will derive from all CBS assessment records, the GATE registers, teacher feedback with Deans and GATE co-ordinator. An open evening for all parents will be held in December to discuss with them the details of the new, Lead class initiative as well as this meeting the PTA will have an opportunity to discuss this initiative at their final meeting in November.

The school policy would need to be updated so that the 'Lead Class' rationale is embedded within the CBS GATE policy.

The GATE co-ordinator will also develop the selected learning models to be used as guides for learning in the Lead class. A 'Thinking Skills' toolbox will also need to be established for all staff to access. Budgets will need to be considered for GATE so that we can continue to be up to date in our teaching and learning delivery for our gifted and talented students.

