



THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL, DUBAI.

SEND DEPARTMENT

GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Westminster school embraces the principle of providing high quality education to all the children who attend the school. The school has high expectations of effort and success from all children.

We believe that our children, including those identified as “Gifted and Talented” have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic and social curriculum, based on the national curriculum and for pre- school children the early years’/ foundation stage curriculum, which is accessible to them. We recognize that all students have individual needs and that many have specific skills or talents and that can be developed and nurtured within the school setting.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to develop a framework that promotes clarity, consistency and guidance in the education of gifted and talented children at our school. At TWS, we aim to develop the whole person and recognize that there are many areas of giftedness and that students can be talented in wide variety of specific skills.

DEFINITION

The term **giftedness** refers to *‘a student who is in possession of untrained and spontaneously-expressed exceptional natural ability in one or more domain of human ability.’* These domains will include intellectual, creative, social, physical abilities.

• The term **talented** refers to *‘a student who has been able to transform their ‘giftedness’ into exceptional performance’.* Talented students will always demonstrate exceptional levels of competence in the specific domains of human ability.

All gifted students have the potential to be highly able but not all highly-able students are truly gifted.

Common distinctions between the able and gifted child include:

- an able student knows the answer; the gifted learner asks the questions.

- an able student works hard to achieve; the gifted learner knows without working hard.
- an able student enjoys school; the gifted learner enjoys self-directed learning
- an able student has a fine imagination; the gifted learner uses that imagination to experiment with ideas.

It is essential in the education of students with special gifts and talents, that schools form effective partnerships with parents so that students with special gifts and talents are understood, valued and included in the school community, where they have the ability to make friendships with students with similar interests and abilities.

AIMS

- To provide appropriate identification and educational opportunities for children who are gifted or talented in specific areas.
- To provide opportunities for gifted and talented children to work at higher cognitive levels, engaging in challenging learning experiences.
- To provide opportunities for all children to develop specific skills or talents.
- To develop the whole child; socially, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, physically and creatively.

IDENTIFICATION

Identification could happen through a range of ways including:

- Observations
- Interviews with parents
- Gifted and/or talented screening checklists and referral forms.
- Student interest surveys, self-reports and student interviews
- Standardised attainment tests.
- Standardised assessments of cognitive development and ability that can only be administered by psychologists.

The identification of students with special gifts and talents should not be viewed as an isolated activity. It is the essential first stage of a continuum of provision which provides appropriate and personalised learning programmes to enable all gifted students to become talented.

The following are key aspects to consider when personalising education programmes for students with special gifts and /or talents.

- **Differentiation** - An effectively differentiated curriculum meets the needs of students with a range of learning styles and ability levels. A differentiated curriculum is essential for gifted and talented learners whose potential is unlikely to develop without special educational provisions.

- **Pace** - It is likely that gifted and talented students will learn at a faster pace. They may understand new concepts more easily and with fewer repetitions. Consequently, teachers will need to provide appropriate challenge to sustain the students' attention and desire to learn.
- **Assessment** - Assessment is an important, on-going diagnostic tool for matching curriculum delivery to students' needs. Pre-assessment allows teachers to determine what students already know, so that a more challenging learning programme can be provided.
- **Groupings** - Students with special gifts and talents can benefit from flexible grouping within the classroom where they can work individually or with other gifted students.
- **Level of work** - Gifted and talented students generally understand concepts and ideas at a level which is above usual age-related expectations. Therefore, the curriculum needs to be concept based and include complex, abstract ideas so that interests and abilities are challenged and extended.
- **Enrichment** - It is expected that the vast majority of gifted and talented learners will be taught in mainstream classes as part of a differentiated curriculum. Provisions for gifted and talented learners need to include opportunities for enrichment, extension and acceleration within and beyond the classroom.

'Differentiation Model of Giftedness and Talent' François Gagné: The DMGT: Changes within beneath and beyond. 2013. International Research Association for Talent Development and Excellence.*

Enrichment and Extension Activities

- Enrolling G&T pupils in any year group, on the recommendation of a member of staff onto online courses.
- The publication of the online school magazine/newsletter and publishing articles from all year groups
- Encouragement of students to enter local and national events and competitions.
- Sports activities run by PE Department, Art club, Music Club.
- Gifted and Talented shelf in library providing extension materials for pupils and staff.
- Departmental G&T activities – for example: word peckers group, reading club led by the English Department, the annual Science and Math exhibitions, POP.
- Gifted and Talented noticeboard – to promote and advertise subject, school and external activities.

SHEIKH HAMDAN AWARD

To be pioneers in leading excellence in educational performance and nurturing the Gifted and Talented, at TWS, students who have received more than 90% in their academics for three consecutive years and have participated in competitions Intra-school and Inter-school level will be nominated for the Sheikh Hamdan Award.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Leadership Team:

- SLT is responsible for the implementation of the G&T policy and for using the guidelines provided to ensure that every member of the school community is aware of their responsibilities and that the needs of all students are registered.

Head of Department:

- To identify pupils who meet the criteria of their subject.
- To pass these names onto the G&T Coordinator via the G&T Database.
- To ensure the enrichment/extension material is used by subject teacher.
- To Liaise with the SLT and Phase Leaders.

Gifted and Talented Coordinator:

- To monitor the provision and progress made by the identified students on an annual basis.
- To access training for self and staff and ensure the professional development programme includes relevant aspects of gifted and talented provision.
- To liaise with SLT.
- To ensure the policy is implemented.
- To draft subject specific Advanced Learning Plans for the students along with the Learning Bay coordinators.
- To oversee and in some cases provide enrichment and extension activities.
- To ensure the enrichment/extension material is used by subject teachers.

Phase Leaders:

- Ensure they are monitoring and tracking progress of the G&T students.
- To oversee provision matches the need of the students.

Teachers:

- To draft subject specific Advanced Learning Plans for the students.
- Show evidence of extension and enrichment opportunities existing within the classroom.
- Provide learning experiences that suitably challenge all children within the classroom.
- Utilise the various methods that lead to the identification of gifted and talented children.
- Utilise resources and programs that support a high quality of gifted and talented education.

- Monitor and evaluate the benefit of particular methods being used within the classroom to meet the needs of particular students and adjust where necessary.
- Discuss strategies that are being implemented on particular gifted and talented students with parents.
- Inform future teachers of students with special needs.

Students:

- Value and acknowledge the giftedness of their peers.
- Look positively on their giftedness and work with teachers and parents to enhance their particular area.

Parents:

- Show a willingness to discuss the variety of methods available in the education of gifted and talented students.
- Participate in the nomination of gifted and talented students, if appropriate.

Monitoring and review

The SEND department monitors the movement of students within the system in school. The department functions effectively with a detailed G&T Action Plan, students are added to the list through G&T referral forms and checklist. Advanced Learning Plans are devised to ensure the provision of enrichment programs for the student.

This policy has been discussed and agreed by the TWS teaching staff and leadership teams for implementation.

Signed Date

Head of Inclusion

Signed Date

Principal

Policy review date