SAINT HELENA'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Something Beautiful for God

ExACT Program Position Paper

POSITION PAPER FOR THE ExACT Program
(Extension through Applied Creative/Critical Thinking)

Approved February 2023

The ExACT Program aims to assist students in Years 3-6 at St Helena's Catholic Primary School by providing academic **EX**tension through the **A**pplication of **C**reative and **C**ritical **T**hinking skills.

RATIONALE

"All students regardless of race, age or gender, by virtue of their dignity as human persons, have a right to an education that is suited to their particular needs and adapted to this ability."

Gravissimum Educationis.nl 196519

Declaration on Christian Education Pope Paul V1.

Testing, using a variety of assessments, has shown that all students benefit from additional support to further develop their academic potential. Children with exceptional abilities need access to appropriate programs to meet their learning needs. Students can then be supported and challenged to develop their gifts as to become talents.

Gifted and Talented students' abilities should be accepted, valued and fostered by all. It should be noted that children can be gifted but may not have had the opportunity to demonstrate their talents.

DEFINITION

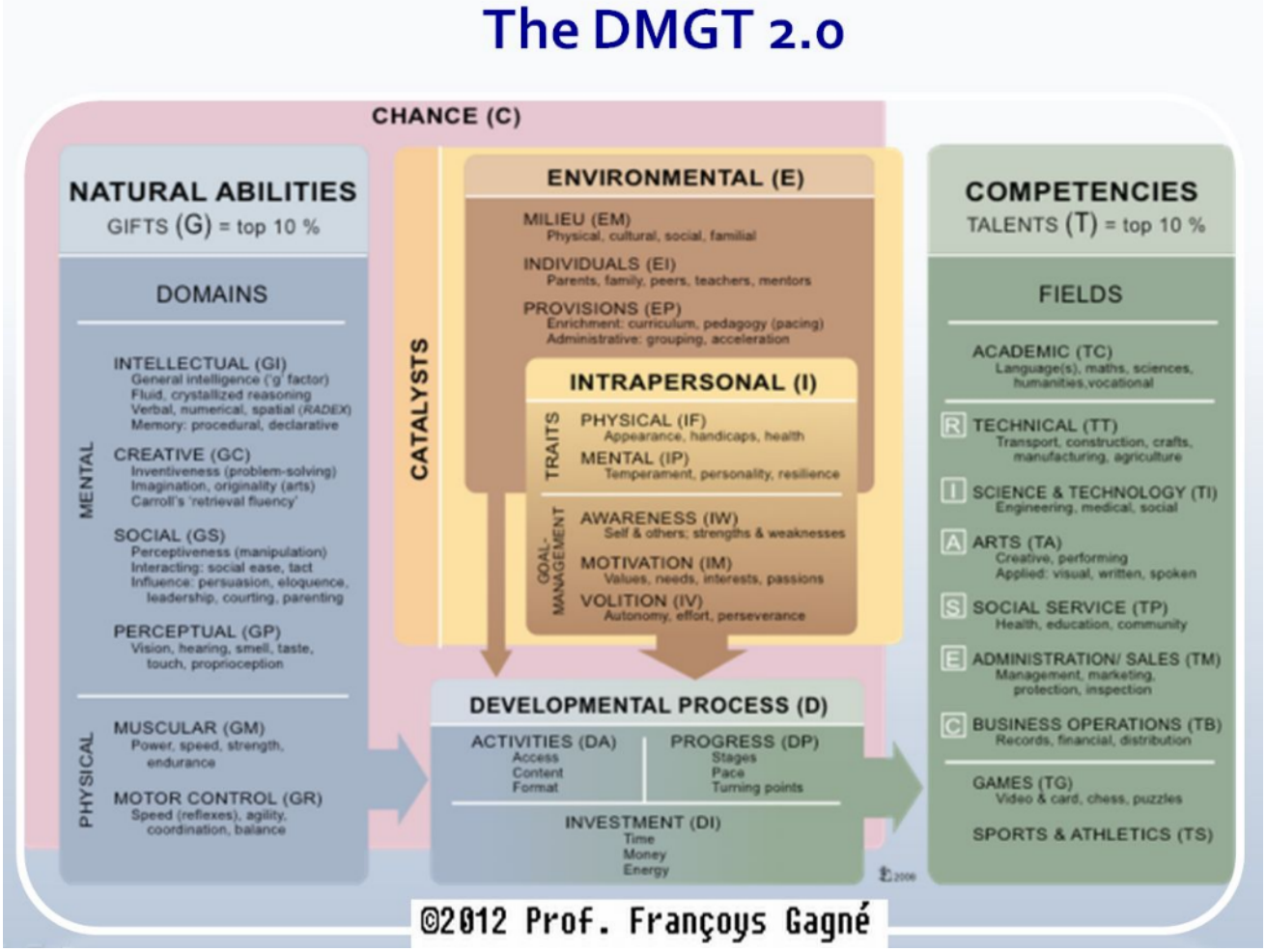
Gagne's (2008) definition differentiates between natural abilities (gifts or aptitudes) and systematically developed skills (talents).

Giftedness can be defined as "the potential to perform at a level significantly beyond what might be expected from one's age peers in any area of human ability."

Talent is "an achievement at a level significantly beyond what might be expected from age-peers."

Prof. Françoys Gagne (2012) notes that talent development is formally defined as the systematic pursuit by students, over a significant period of time, of a structured program of activities leading to a specific excellence goal, in short, attaining talent (competency) in a field.

The **Developmental Model of Giftedness and Talent** shows factors that allow this to occur.



Gagné, F. (2009). Building gifts into talents: Detailed overview of the DMGT 2.0. In B. MacFarlane, & T. Stambaugh, (Eds.), Leading change in gifted education: The festschrift of Dr. Joyce VanTassel-Baska. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press.

ExACT Program at St Helena's Catholic Primary
St Helena's ExACT Program will endeavour to provide units of work that allow for the development and understanding of how gifts grow into talents.

Students eligible for selection into the ExACT program are those who excel or have the potential to excel in general academic, abstract reasoning, or specific ability areas such as English, mathematics or science (see 'Identification' below). ExACT will assist in the journey from 'Gifted' (natural abilities) to 'Talented' (competencies) by providing the appropriate environmental catalyst, developmental process and assistance with intrapersonal development. Students may, or may not, be deeply motivated, or highly able to show their abilities in a variety of ways that may not be readily apparent without the use of diagnostic testing.

Ongoing inclusion in ExACT withdrawal classes is not guaranteed. Rather, it will be dependent on a student's ability to maintain the standard of work in his/her regular classes as well as the ExACT Program. **Review will occur each term with the Classroom Teacher and the ExACT Teacher.**

As ExACT is in addition to standard classroom programs, all ExACT activities are expected to be undertaken and completed in class time. It should be noted that it is possible that the regular classroom teacher may not have sufficient evidence to allocate a grade on the class they are forfeiting to attend ExACT.

ExACT aims to:
Provide more positive educational outcomes for gifted students through:

- appropriate identification using diagnostic testing
- provision of well-planned enrichment (class withdrawal) programs
- provision for early identification
- provision of external opportunities when possible and appropriate
- individual support where appropriate
- inclusion of students in relevant competitions and experiences external to St Helena's Catholic Primary School
- ongoing professional development of the Gift and Talented Teacher, all staff and others as appropriate, in the area of gifted education
- network meetings in schools and relevant organisations including Catholic Education WA (CEWA) and other Independent and Department of Education schools.

IDENTIFICATION (Years 3 – 6)
Inclusion in the programme in Years 3-6 will be considered according to:

- diagnostic testing (e.g., AGAT, TOLA and other relevant testing i.e., SPM)
- standardised testing such as NAPLAN and PIPS
- student and parent commitment to learning
- external psychometric testing by a practicing psychologist (i.e., WISC or Stanford Binet)
- classroom & ExACT teacher support
- Principal approval

PROVISION (Years 3 – 6)
Appropriate provision could include a combination of the following:

- inclusion in a weekly withdrawal extension programme
- opportunities for students to work on STEM projects
- opportunities for students to develop their creative and critical thinking
- inclusion of students in relevant competitions and experiences external to St Helena's Catholic Primary School which may include:
    - Tim Winton Writing Competition
    - Minecraft Indigital Challenge
    - National History Challenge
    - Science Talent Search
    - Tournament of the Minds
    - 'Have Sum' Fun Maths Competition
    - Cluedunnit (Law Society of WA)
    - Young ICT Explorers
    - Royal Show – Scarecrow Build
    - STEM – Video Game Challenge
    - Make Your Own Storybook Competition
    - STEM MAD - CEWA

ExACT PROGRAM FORMAT (Years 3 – 6)

Identified students in Years 3-6 will be **withdrawn** for up to 150 minutes per week.

The activities undertaken in these classes will involve the further development of a variety of skills including:

- independent working skills
- research skills
- problem solving skills
- intrinsic motivation
- higher order thinking skills
- self-regulation
- self confidence
- questioning and posing problem skills

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION (Years 3 – 6)

Students will be assessed using:

- anecdotal records
- self and peer assessment
- interview with the Principal of St Helena's Catholic Primary School each semester

TIMES OF WITHDRAWAL SESSIONS (Years 3-6)

Year	Time Allocation
3	100 minutes
4	100 minutes
5	150 minutes
6	150 minutes

CURRIUCLUM SUPPORT (PP-2)

Students with psychometric testing using internal or external psychologist showing a gifted IO (as suggested by Rogers and Vialle), will be offered support by the ExACT teacher.

COMPUTER ACCESS

The children will have access to their own iPad equipped with Bluetooth keyboard and stylus pen.

EXTERNAL ROLE

The ExACT Teacher's external role could include:

- **network meetings with other schools and relevant organisations (CEWA, Gifted WA)**
- **working in partnership with schools and organisations to create opportunities for the St Helena students.**

ExACT POLICY GLOSSARY

ACER Australian Council for Educational Research

AGAT ACER General Ability Tests (AGAT). The **ACER General Ability Tests (AGAT)** is a series of tests designed to assist teachers of students aged seven to sixteen years (approximately Year 2 to Year 10) in their assessment of students' general reasoning ability. There are nine AGAT tests that have been developed especially for use in schools.

Each of the tests assesses students' reasoning skills in three areas:

- Verbal
- Numerical
- Abstract (visual)

CEWA Catholic Education Western Australia

SPM Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices is designed to assess non-verbal reasoning. It can be completed in the earliest years of schooling through to until the age of 90.

STEM Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

TOLA TEST OF LEARNING ABILITY – TOLA 4 and 6

This test has been designed to measure broad language and reasoning abilities which correlate with academic success.

The TOLA has three components:

1. Verbal comprehension as measured by work knowledge using vocabulary-synonym items.
2. Problem solving items of a mathematical kind.
3. Verbal analysis and reasoning as measured by analogies.