



# RANGIORA NEW LIFE SCHOOL

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Providing quality Christian education that equips and inspires all students to reach their life potential in order to serve God's purposes.

Procedure	Curriculum	Special Education	
Ratification	2007 (October)	Chairperson	
Last Review		Chairperson	

Rationale for Procedure At the Curriculum Committee's review day on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2007 it was decided that the present special needs policy needed clear procedures both with regards to special abilities and special needs as the school increasingly recognises the need for meeting the diverse needs of our learners. Therefore a separate procedure was drafted over August and September of 2007 with close consultation with staff and parents of current students identified as being gifted and talented.

### A. SPECIAL ABILITIES

"You knit me together in my mother's womb; I praise You because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Psalm 139:13,14

#### DEFINITIONS

Special Abilities children refers to those pupils who are identified as possessing demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high performing capabilities in specific academic, intellectual, sporting, creative, naturalistic, leadership, performing or visual arts, moral and spiritual domains.

**Māori Special Abilities:** Beliefs about talented are intertwined within a cultural context. Māori characteristics include: spiritual, cognitive, affective, aesthetic, musical, psychomotor, social, artistic, intuitive, creativity, leadership, cultural abilities and qualities and service to others.

**Pasifika Special Abilities:** Children are gifts from God. The term 'Gifted' is viewed as a Western concept. Pasifika children are referred to as talented rather than gifted. The Biblical definition of 'Gifts of the Spirit' is important. Pasifika characteristics include: communication/oratory, orientation/heritage, disposition/respect/service, enrichment/cultural/intellectual, spiritual/God/church/honour.

**Specific Academic:** as demonstrated by superior ability in mastering skills and concepts in one or more curriculum areas:

**Intellectual:** as demonstrated by superior ability for:

- Understanding facts, concepts, generalizations and their relationships
- Identifying patterns
- Verbal and nonverbal reasoning
- Spatial perceptions
- Developing and evaluating ideas

**Creativity:** as demonstrated by superior abilities in:

- Fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration
- Divergent thinking skills
- Problem solving strategies

**Leadership:** as demonstrated by a variety of outstanding characteristics, which may

include:

- Responsibility
- Rapid insight into cause-effect relationships
- Interpersonal intuition
- Ability to motivate the performance of others

**Visual and Performing Arts:** as evidenced by a superior aptitude for demonstrating, typically through exhibition or performance, aesthetic, critical, historical and production aspects of dance, music, theater and/or the visual arts

These are expanded through Dr. Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences:

**Linguistic intelligence** involves sensitivity to spoken and written language, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use language to accomplish certain goals. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively use language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically; and language as a means to remember information.

**Logical-mathematical intelligence** consists of the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically. It entails the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

**Musical intelligence** involves skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns. It encompasses the capacity to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms.

**Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence** entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems. It is the ability to use mental abilities to coordinate bodily movements.

**Spatial intelligence** involves the potential to recognize and use the patterns of wide space and more confined areas.

**Interpersonal intelligence** is concerned with the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people. It allows people to work effectively with others. **Intrapersonal intelligence** entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. It involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives.

**Naturalistic intelligence** exhibits in a strong affinity to the outside world or to animals. They may enjoy subjects, shows and stories that deal with animals or natural phenomena, biology, zoology, botany, geology, meteorology, paleontology, or astronomy. They are keenly aware of their surroundings and changes in their environment, even if these changes are at minute or subtle levels. Often this is due to their highly-developed levels of sensory perception.

**Moral intelligence** is the capacity to understand right from wrong; it means to have strong ethical convictions and to act on them so that one behaves in the right and honorable way.

**Spiritual intelligence** calls for multiple ways of knowing and discovering deeper experiences of God and for the integration of the inner life of mind and spirit with the outer life of work in the world. It can be cultivated through questing, inquiry, and practice. Spiritual maturity is expressed through wisdom in dialogue, written expression and compassionate action towards others. Spiritual intelligence is necessary for discernment in making spiritual choices that result in changed practices and outcomes which align with and develop Scriptural principles in the life of the believer.

## IDENTIFICATION

Identification of students with special abilities will be undertaken using the following tools and approaches:

S.E.A. – School Entry Assessment

6 year nett

Running Records

BURT word test

Schonell

standardised tests of achievement and general ability

asTTle reading, writing and mathematics

P.A.T. (Progressive Achievement Tests) Listening Comprehension

S.T.A.R. – Supplementary Test of Achievement in Reading

N.C.E.A. – National Certificate of Educational Achievement

Multidimensional testing/triangulation, (three nationally normed tests and three other indicators)

Awards/prizes

Extra curricular and out of school interests, abilities, achievements

Parental identification

Teacher observation and identification

Anecdotal information

Teacher-aide observation and identification

Peer-nomination

Self-nomination

Unit assessments

Product: books, art pieces

Performance

Behavioural indicators

Oral tests for the writing challenged

Dual Exceptionality – pupils exhibiting Special Abilities and Special Needs

## PRACTICES

**Enrichment** – activities in addition to and different from the regular classroom activities

**Acceleration** – aligns special abilities pupils' abilities and learning needs more closely to the curriculum:

Subject acceleration - involves offering the pupil an advanced curriculum in a single subject

Whole year skipping - IQ of 130 + for a full year acceleration advised

**Curriculum compacting** – previously mastered curriculum that might be repetitious is eliminated giving pupils opportunity for enrichment and acceleration

**Within class ability grouping** – flexibly grouping pupils within the classroom according to abilities and/or interests

**Cluster grouping within heterogeneous classrooms** - the top 5-8 gifted learners at a grade level are placed with a trained teacher of the gifted

**Concurrent enrolment** - enabling a child to attend more than one school at a time such as the Correspondence School or the One Day School

**Mentorship** - individual instruction at an advanced level in a single subject offered by an expert in that subject

**Credit by examination** - early admission to tertiary

**Independent special interest groups** – giving choices to selected pupils to select topics, goal set, select methodology and form of presentation in negotiation with the teacher

**Correspondence School** – offering courses which cannot be provided by the school

**Video Conferencing** – matching pupils with similar interests across several schools

**Programmes outside the school** – International Examinations, CANTA Maths, SIRIUS, Science Alive, sports competitions,

**Individual Education Programmes** – specialised programme for pupils who require special identification and intervention

**Consultation** with the parent and pupil

Collaboration with school-based personnel to develop additional assessment and intervention strategies

Referral to the school based coordinator for further assistance in implementing strategies or coordination of support services

### **Aim of supplementary programmes:**

Enable the most able gifted and talented pupils to interact with their gifted and talented peers

Promote academic rigor and intellectual challenge in specific curriculum fields; and

provide opportunities for critical analysis and emphasise higher-order thought processes (i.e. application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation)

Additionally, where appropriate, these programs should:

Engender open-endedness which encourages pupil choice and negotiation

Enable pupil interaction with practicing experts so that first-hand investigations can be undertaken (e.g. guest speakers, excursions, mentors)

Encourage pupils to take risks and back their judgement when experimenting with new styles, ideas and approaches to learning or discovery

Facilitate the pursuit of in-depth investigation of real problems and the presentation of results to an appropriate audience

Allow pupils to work at their own pace

Require pupils to evaluate and reflect upon their own products and learning outcomes in terms of their original goals and objectives; and encourage constructive criticism and feedback

### **SUPPORT**

University of Canterbury Education Plus Advisory

Supplementary reading material

CAGE

SIRIUS

### **EVALUATION**

**What** will be evaluated?

Definition – does it cover the Special Abilities pupils in our school?

Identification Procedures – have we covered all areas of 'giftedness' in our school?

Do we have patterns which require investigation i.e. can we ensure that all identification procedures fairly identify pupils according to gender, ethnicity, age, disabled?

Classroom Practice – are the needs of Special Abilities pupils met within our subjects?

Diverse Learners – are we meeting the cultural, social and emotional needs of our Special Abilities pupils?

**How:**

Include pupil view, teacher view and parental view through...

Interviews and questionnaires

Pupil self-assessments

Teacher-made tests

Checklists, rating scales, and anecdotal records

Product evaluation from science exhibits, drama productions, art works, craft, music performance, and social studies

Classroom observation data

Teacher diaries and daily logs

Standardised tests

Focus groups as an interview forum

**Next steps:**

Recommendations for the provision of Special Abilities pupils through the annual evaluation of different components of Special Abilities programs, including curriculum, professional development, identification, process, products for program organization

- How many pupils were served?
- How many pupils were referred?
- Is the referral process working? (interview referring teachers)
- Do pupils, teachers and parents feel that the needs of Special Abilities pupils are being catered for within and outside the classroom?
- How many teachers participated in professional development and what kinds?

## **B. SPECIAL NEEDS**

“...to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from prison those who sit in darkness ... (to bestow) a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.” Isaiah 42:7; 61:3

### **DEFINITIONS**

Special Needs Children refers to a number of disorders that may affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding or use of verbal or nonverbal information. These include, but are not limited to: language processing, phonological processing, visual spatial processing, processing speed, memory and attention, and executive functions (e.g. planning and decision-making)

Learning disabilities range in severity and may interfere with the acquisition and use of one or more of the following:

- Oral language (e.g., listening, speaking, understanding)
- Reading (e.g., decoding, phonetic knowledge, word recognition, comprehension)
- Written language (e.g., spelling and written expression)
- Mathematics (e.g., computation, problem solving)
- Kinesthetic (.e.g. fine and gross motor coordination skills)
- Interpersonal skills (e.g. whanauntanga/relationships)
- Moral or spiritual understanding

Learning disabilities may also involve difficulties with organizational skills, social perception, social interaction and perspective taking.

### **IDENTIFICATION**

Persistent difficulties in the acquisition of pre-academic skills such as recognition of letters and numbers in the early primary years; and/or persistent difficulties in the acquisition of reading, writing, numeracy, motor coordination and relationship skills.

Pupils with learning disabilities demonstrate a significant weakness in one or more cognitive processes (perception, memory, attention, receptive or expressive language abilities, and visual-spatial abilities) relative to overall intellectual functioning. Norm-referenced assessment instruments often assess such weaknesses.

Pupils with learning disabilities may demonstrate a significant discrepancy between estimated learning potential and academic/social/sporting achievement as measured by norm-referenced or alternative achievement instruments.

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Teacher observation and identification

Teacher-aide observation and identification

Self-nomination

Unit assessments

Product: books, art pieces

Performance

Behavioural indicators

## **PRACTICES**

Comprehensive assessment of learning needs and use of alternative instructional strategies by classroom teacher  
Consultation with the parent and pupil, with possible screening to investigate whether there is a health basis for the learning difficulty

Collaboration with school-based personnel to develop additional assessment and intervention strategies

Referral to the school based coordinator for further assistance in implementing strategies or coordination of support services

Possible referral for an extended assessment (psycho-educational assessment) to determine the presence, nature, severity and educational implications of a learning disability and provide additional information for planning

In some cases, pupils may have been identified in clinical settings e.g. Seabrook McKenzie Centre for Specific Learning Disabilities, Speech Language Therapy Occupational Therapy or independent Psychologist.

The assessment of a pupil with a learning disability should integrate information from a number of sources, for example:

- information from the family about health, social-emotional adjustment, developmental history
- overall intellectual functioning, specific cognitive abilities, socio-emotional status
- pre-academic or academic skills; and
- learning strengths and weaknesses, and their implications

Assessment information should contribute to the process of planning and evaluating the pupil's education program.

Individual Education Programmes – specialised programme for pupils who require special identification and intervention

Multi-level teaching/in class grouping

Specialised intervention e.g. Reading Recovery

1:1 intervention e.g. Teacher Aides

Successmaker

Direct remedial, corrective, tutorial or skill-building instruction

Adapted, modified or supplementary curriculum and materials

Use of equipment, including computer and audiovisual technology

Social skills training;

Instruction and practice of self advocacy skills

Learning strategies instruction

Inclusive education is intended to take place in regular classrooms, but this does not preclude the use of different learning environments such as small group instruction in a resource room for a designated period, or other specialized settings e.g. SPELD tutor/ Speech Language Therapist/Occupational Therapist/Counsellor. The goal of the placement should be to meet the pupils' educational needs.

## **SUPPORT**

R.T.L.B. - Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour

R.T.Lit – Resource Teacher of Literacy

G.S.E. – Group Special Education

S.L.T. – Speech Language Therapy

O.T.- Occupational Therapy

P.H.N. – Public Health Nurse

Whakatata House – if behaviour affects learning

SPELD/Seabrook McKenzie Centre

Hagley Community College Dr. Eleanor Lightfoot

Courses run by specialist personnel

## EVALUATION

**What** will be evaluated:

Definition – does it cover the Special Needs pupils in our school?

Identification Procedures – have we covered all areas of remedial intervention in our school?

Do we have patterns which require investigation i.e. can we ensure that all identification procedures fairly identify pupils according to gender, ethnicity or age?

Classroom Practice – are the needs of Special Needs pupils met within our subjects?

Diverse Learners – are we meeting the cultural, social and emotional needs of our Special Needs pupils?

**How:**

Include pupil view, teacher view and parental view through...

Interviews and questionnaires

Pupil self-assessments

Teacher-made tests

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Product evaluation from science exhibits, drama productions, art works, craft, music performance, and social studies

Classroom observation data

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Standardised tests

Focus groups as an interview forum

In most cases pupils will take part in the regular program with necessary adaptations (e.g. alternative/modified evaluation methods). Evaluation will indicate the extent to which learning outcomes were attained. The method of evaluation will be consistent with either an I.E.P. or will make allowance for the learning disabilities of the pupil within the classroom setting.

Some pupils may require extensive modifications to parts of their program so that some of their goals will be different from the regular curriculum. In these cases, evaluation will be based on the degree to which the individualized goals are achieved.

**Next steps:**

Recommendations for the provision of Special Needs pupils through the annual evaluation of different components of Special Needs programs, including curriculum, professional development, identification, process, products for program organization

- How many pupils were served?
- How many pupils were referred?
- Is the referral process working? (interview referring teachers)
- Do pupils, teachers and parents feel that the needs of Special Needs pupils are being catered for within and outside the classroom?
- How many teachers participated in professional development and what kinds?

An annual report to the Board of Trustees will be presented.