



Gifted and Talented Policy

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Introduction

Al Salam values all students equally and endeavours to ensure that each student should have the opportunity to realise his/her potential in a challenging and supportive environment. The school ensures that students are provided with opportunities to fulfil their potential in all areas; academic, creative, sporting and social. The teaching and learning at Al Salam is planned to ensure that every student aspires to the highest level of personal achievement.

The gifted and talented policy supports the school's aim and outlines the provisions to support gifted and talented students. The policy adheres to the philosophies and principles laid out by the Ministry of Education in UAE on general rules for the provision of special education programmes and services. This states that the goal is to “ provide appropriate services to students with special gifts and talents in all educational settings in the public and private schools that meet their needs and enhance their abilities.” The policy also takes into account the guidelines given by the UAE School Inspection Framework 2015- 2016, Section 4.1.

Definitions

The UK Department for Education defines Gifted and Talented in the following way:

Gifted and Talented is the term applied to those students who are achieving, or have the potential to achieve, at a level substantially beyond the rest of their year group.

- ‘gifted’ learners are those who have abilities in one or more academic subjects.
- Students with an average CAT4 of 130 or above, or one or more CAT4 battery scores of 127 or above are considered ‘gifted’.
- ‘talented’ learners are those who have particular abilities in sport, music, design or creative and performing arts.

The KHDA Inspection Framework definitions take account of the ‘Differentiation Model of Giftedness and talent’ and align with international best practice:

- The term giftedness refers to ‘a student who is in possession of untrained and spontaneously-expressed exceptional natural ability in one or more domains of human ability.’ These domains will include intellectual, creative, social, physical abilities. In the case of a gifted student, whilst exceptional potential will be present, they may actually under achieve.
- 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.



Aims

The aims of our Gifted and Talented provision are:

- To personalise learning for all pupils including gifted and talented students
- To recognise, identify, challenge and stimulate our gifted and talented learners

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Ensure that all gifted and talented students are identified appropriately by the teacher through a variety of identification processes.
- Ensure that all gifted and talented students have access to a broad curriculum and are provided with opportunities for further enrichment within the school in their area of giftedness.
- Ensure greater participation of all students, including gifted and talented as well as “twice exceptional” within the classroom with the expectation that every student is required to think deeply and make a contribution through cooperative and collaborative learning.
- Encourage partnership with parents and outside agencies to make sure that gifted and talented students are also provided with further enriching experiences outside the school and that these achievements are acknowledged in school.
- Enable all teaching staff to take responsibility for identifying gifted and talented students and providing them with suitable opportunities to achieve their full potential.
- Ensure that gifted and talented students are nurtured and encouraged to contribute to raising the standard of attainment in the whole school by providing them with opportunities for leadership, entrepreneurship, and peer mentoring.
- Celebrate the achievements of our gifted and talented students in a way that encourages all students to greater aspirations.



Identification Process

At Al Salam the identification of gifted and talented students is done in several ways using a well developed process.

Identification in Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

In the early years, students often develop different skills at different times. The clue to gift and talent in early years is more to do with **creativity** and the use of skills to do **something unusual or unexpected**. In the FS and KS1 teachers will promote creativity in all students in different areas of learning. Teacher observation of the student plays a very crucial role in identifying a student as gifted or talented

A **Primary identification** checklist will be used to informally identify students having characteristics and behaviours of a high potential learner in FS and KS1. It includes students who possess demonstrated or potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level. The identification checklist will be used for identification of students in FS and KS1 with potential ability to perform at an exceptionally high level in these areas:

- **literacy**
- **numeracy**
- **Oracy**
- **Any other areas**

Identification in Key Stage 2, 3 and 4

Identifying giftedness in KS2 can be somewhat different from identifying it in the early years and KS1. The methods and criteria for identification should take into account the developmental differences and changing educational needs of students as they progress through school. Hence, formal identification of Gifted and Talented students will take place in KS2.

Teachers will complete this checklist for the specifically identified area of giftedness. Teacher observation of the student plays a very crucial role in identifying a student as gifted or talented within their specific subject. A detailed checklist is provided to teachers outlining the characteristics of typical behaviour in a variety of areas such as :

- **general intellectual ability,**
- **creative/divergent thinking,**
- **specific academic aptitude in language, reading, maths, science**
- **leadership,**
- **creative arts,**
- **music,**



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- *drama and*
 - *physical education*
 - *entrepreneurship.*
-
- CAT 4 data is also taken into consideration when identifying gifted and talented students.
 - The threshold for CAT4 is a SAS of 130 and above in one or two batteries.
 - Parent meetings are conducted in order to gather detailed information about the student as well as to gain parental consent for placing their child on the gifted and talented programme.
 - A checklist will be provided to parents similar to the checklist filled by the teacher. This will help in better understanding of the characteristics of the student.
 - Parent nomination is also considered as a method of identification for Gifted & Talented.
 - Standardised assessment of cognitive development and ability conducted by an educational psychologist will also be considered as an important factor for identifying the capabilities of a gifted student. Any cost associated with assessment will be covered by the parents.

Twice exceptional students

The term “twice-exceptional,” is used to describe gifted students who reveal the characteristics of giftedness, with the potential for high achievement, and who have one or more special educational needs or disability (SEND). The term Dual and Multiple Exceptionality (DME) is used in the UK. These disabilities may include specific learning disabilities (SpLD), speech and language disorders, emotional/behavioural disorders, physical disabilities, autism spectrum, or other impairments such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Like other gifted learners, twice-exceptional students are highly knowledgeable and talented in at least one particular domain. However, their giftedness is often overshadowed by their disabilities, or these students may be able to mask or hide their learning deficits by using their talents to compensate.

Teachers and LSA’s are trained in identifying twice exceptional students and providing them with proper provisions.



Advanced Learning Plans (ALP)

- An ALP is a written record of the gifted and talented programme provided to a student identified as gifted or talented.
- It consists of details regarding additional enrichment programmes being provided, and curricular and extracurricular activities of the student based on his/her performance.
- It also details the student's identified areas of strengths and abilities.
- The Form Tutor, the Subject teacher, Parent, Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Head of Inclusion and any other external specialists will be responsible to contribute to the ALP.

Provisions, curriculum access and enrichment

The school nurtures creative thinkers who are able to meet challenges in the wider world and this includes supporting those students who already show signs of exceptional capabilities and are deemed as gifted and talented.

Provisions for students identified on the gifted and talented register are generally facilitated by the Form tutor or the subject teacher through high quality teaching and differentiation. Learning plans will incorporate tasks that ***stretch and challenge*** gifted and talented students. This encourages teachers to allocate time for students to delve into complex problems, explore key concepts in depth, and engage in critical thinking fostering a culture where lesson time is maximised, and students are continually encouraged to strive for excellence.

In the Foundation Stage ***enrichment provisions*** will be provided in learning plans to promote creativity within learning. On-going teacher assessment will monitor the progress of gifted and talented students.

Approaches to Develop Stretch and Challenge in the classroom

'Stretch and challenge' is a teaching approach used in the classroom to ensure that students are consistently encouraged and supported to reach their full potential. This approach aims to provide a balanced learning experience that accommodates the needs of all students, including those who may find the material relatively easy and those who may find it more challenging. Here are some key aspects of stretch and challenge in the classroom:

Differentiation to deepen understanding: Teachers use differentiation techniques to tailor their instruction to the individual needs and abilities of their students. These students need to be given **mastery questions** and tasks that move beyond basic recall or application to



challenge their understanding and ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate complex concepts. This ensures the learner is **deepening their understanding** rather than simply completing more work.

Acceleration: Students can be accelerated across the year or within subjects as per their area of giftedness. This can be facilitated with support provided from Subject Leaders.

Higher-order thinking: Stretch and challenge often involve promoting higher-order thinking skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical reasoning. Students are encouraged to delve deeper into subjects, ask probing questions, and explore complex ideas.

Extension activities: Teachers may provide extension activities or tasks that go beyond the core curriculum. These tasks are designed to challenge students to think critically and apply their knowledge in novel ways. Extension activities can include research projects, debates, or creative assignments.

Open-ended questions: Instead of asking simple, factual questions, teachers use open-ended questions that require students to think more deeply and engage in discussions. These questions encourage students to express their ideas, opinions, and arguments.

Individualised learning goals: Teachers work with students to set individualised learning goals and objectives. This helps students take ownership of their learning and strive for personal improvement.

Flexible grouping: Teachers may use flexible grouping strategies, such as ability grouping or mixed-ability grouping, to ensure that students have opportunities to work with peers who challenge and complement their abilities.

Varied assessment methods: Assessment methods are designed to assess not only students' knowledge but also their ability to apply concepts, think critically, and solve problems. This might include essays, projects, presentations, and other forms of assessment that go beyond traditional tests and quizzes.

Feedback and reflection: Teachers provide constructive feedback that helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning processes and make adjustments as needed.

Curriculum enrichment: In some cases, schools may offer enrichment programmes or extracurricular activities that allow students to explore subjects in greater depth or pursue their interests beyond the standard curriculum.



Encouraging a growth mindset: Teachers promote a growth mindset, emphasising that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort and persistence. This mindset encourages students to embrace challenges and see them as opportunities for growth.

Overall, the goal of stretch and challenge in the classroom is to create a stimulating and supportive learning environment where all students can reach their full potential, and do not limit how far they can progress regardless of their initial abilities or backgrounds. It recognizes that students have diverse learning needs and aims to provide opportunities for each student to excel and grow academically.

This approach is further supported by the following pedagogical strategies incorporated in the teaching and learning culture at ASPs.

Peeling Approach: The peeling approach in mixed ability teaching involves breaking down the curriculum or instructional content into distinct layers or levels, each tailored to the needs and abilities of different groups of students within the same classroom. This strategy aims to address the diverse learning needs and developmental stages of students with different learning abilities and levels including high ability and gifted students as well as low ability or special needs.

At the initial level, the teacher assesses the students' prior knowledge, skills, and learning needs to understand where each student stands in terms of their year-level expectations. The teacher may group students at a similar level of understanding then tailor instruction to accommodate the diverse learning styles and abilities within the classroom. The higher ability or gifted students may proceed to work independently or in small groups on tasks or assignments that are appropriate for their ability. The teacher may periodically rotate students between peels based on their progress, allowing them to receive instruction at different levels as needed.

The peeling approach acknowledges the complexity of teaching a diverse group of students within a single classroom and seeks to provide more personalised and effective instruction. It requires careful planning, flexibility, and a deep understanding of the curriculum, as well as the individual needs of each student. Teachers often need to be resourceful and creative to implement this approach successfully and meet the learning needs of all students.

Kagan: Kagan is an educational approach and a set of instructional strategies and structures focused on promoting cooperative learning and positive interdependence in the classroom. Kagan structures and strategies are widely used in classrooms to enhance student



engagement, promote collaboration, and improve academic and social outcomes through cooperative learning, positive interdependence and active engagement.

Kagan structures such as Think-Pair-Share, Round Robin, Numbered Heads Together, and the Jigsaw technique incorporate Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983), recognizing that students have different strengths and abilities. This allows for a more inclusive and differentiated approach to teaching that effectively caters to highly-abled and gifted learners.

Leadership roles and Student led initiatives

ASPS fosters a culture of developing student leadership skills by providing several significant opportunities to students as representatives of the student body and school community.

Students demonstrating exceptional leadership are encouraged to participate

- ***The ASPS Student Council*** is a student governance body composed of students elected by their peers to represent and advocate for the student body within the school. The student council plays a vital role in fostering leadership, civic engagement, and positive changes within the school. Here are some key aspects and functions of a student council in schools:
- **Election:** Members of the student council are typically elected by their fellow students through a democratic process. This can include campaigns, speeches, and voting. In some cases, students may be appointed to specific roles or positions.
- **Leadership and Representation:** Student council members serve as leaders who represent the interests and concerns of the student body to the school administration, teachers, and staff. They are the voice of the students and advocate for their needs.
- **Planning and Organising Events:** Student councils often plan and organise various events and activities within the school, such as bake sales, fundraisers, and community service projects. These activities can help build a sense of community and school spirit.
- **Problem-Solving:** Student councils work to address issues or concerns raised by students, such as academic challenges, safety concerns, or improvements to the school environment. They may work with school administrators to find solutions.
- **Promoting School Spirit:** Student councils are responsible for promoting school spirit and a positive school culture. This can involve organising pep rallies, assemblies, and other events that celebrate the school's achievements and traditions.



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- **Fundraising:** Student councils often engage in fundraising activities to support various initiatives and projects within the school. These funds can be used for scholarships, improvements to facilities, or charitable causes.
- **Community Outreach:** Some student councils engage in community outreach and service projects, connecting the school with the local community and addressing broader social issues.
- **Student Advocacy:** Student councils may advocate for student rights, fair policies, and changes in school rules. They can provide input on decisions that affect students, such as curriculum changes, dress codes, or disciplinary policies. They also collaborate with staff and other students in helping resolve bullying or friendship issues that may arise.
- **Leadership Development:** Serving on a student council offers valuable leadership experience and helps students develop essential skills in teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and decision-making.
- **Student Involvement:** Student councils aim to encourage student involvement in the school's governance and activities. They often hold regular meetings where students can voice their concerns and ideas.
- **Promoting Responsible Citizenship:** Student councils promote responsible citizenship by engaging students in the democratic process and teaching them about the importance of participating in their school and community.

- **Governing Advisory Board:** There are also opportunities for students to participate at a School Governance level as Student Reps on the GAB: Governing Advisory Board. The GAB is made up of Al Salam Education Executive Governors, the Principal, parents and students. All members have an active role in delivering on specific goals from the School Development Plan.

- **UAE Initiatives:** The UAE Initiatives is an extension of ASPS Student Council and allows opportunities to gifted and talented and highly abled students to become global citizens by actively engaging in and addressing global interests such as sustainability, mental health and innovation.

Developing oracy

Students identified as Gifted and Talented in Primary are encouraged to participate in speaking activities within the classroom as well as extra curricular setups such as debates, elocution competitions, dramatic performances etc. The younger children from KS1 are taught storytelling techniques and from KS2 onwards all students can deliver TED-style talks



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to a real audience about a given topic from a wide range of categories of current affairs, environmental concerns, technological developments and the impact on their community as well as the wider world. The school creates opportunities for students to develop their oracy skills and be able to find their voice.

Provision in Cocurricular areas

At Al Salam we identify exceptionally talented students in Co curricular areas such as performing art (some external), creative arts, ICT and sports. They are supported by subject specialist teachers who help in enriching specific skills identified in these subject areas.

Gifted and Talented students identified in Cocurricular subjects are given the opportunity to to present their talent within the school in the form of competitions and talent shows. Inter school competitions are also promoted in areas of Art, ICT and Sports.

Emirati Enrichment programme

The Emirati Enrichment programme at Al Salam helps in identifying potential Emirati students across the school that display knowledge and skills of higher ability. Different ways of identification are used such as teacher observation, student work sample, internal progress report, teacher and parent checklist.

An Emirati Enrichment Plan is developed with advanced learning targets for Emirati students identified with exceptional knowledge and abilities within the Emirati cohort to promote critical thinking skills.

Working with external agencies

It is important that gifted and talented learners are provided with exposure outside school to sharpen their skills and be challenged in their area of ability. At Al Salam we engage in outside school provisions to support the development of gifted and talented Students. This includes:

- Promoting inter school competitions.
- Creating awareness amongst the parent community of the school. Parents can inform the school if their child is engaged with any gifted and talented programmes outside school.
- Developing a register of external contacts.
- Encouraging students to attend external workshops in their area of interest.
- Developing a register of Students attending outside clubs.



Staff development

- Training will be provided to all teaching staff across the school by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator on identification and provisions for gifted and talented.
- The Gifted and Talented Policy will be shared with the Teaching staff to develop a whole school approach to gifted and talented provision.
- Learning walks and book looks will be conducted by the Gifted and Talented Coordinator to ensure gifted and talented curriculum differentiation and provision is delivered effectively for the gifted and talented cohort.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Gifted and Talented Coordinator will:

- Be the lead for gifted and talented identification and provision throughout the school.
- Report directly to the Head of Inclusion regarding all matters of the gifted and talented programme within the school
- Formulate and monitor the school policy for gifted and talented.
- Ensure with the teacher that the best individual curriculum or learning material/style is used for each student, with specific reference to the subject area in which they are gifted or talented.
- Collaborate with the Inclusion Team and Counsellors to ensure a holistic approach for twice exceptional students
- Ensure that documentation and ALP's (advanced Learning Plans) for each identified student are formulated and kept updated, and information disseminated to teachers and parents in line with Inclusion Team/ School standards.
- Identify and ensure adequate opportunities for gifted and talented students to flourish in non-academic subjects and areas of emotional / leadership, both within and outside of the school environment.
- Liaise with YL / MLT / SLT to develop initiatives to enhance the provision for gifted and talented students.
- Initiate after-school clubs for non-academic gifted areas (Social, Leadership, Debating / Public Speaking / Dramatic, Emotional giftedness).
- Facilitate practical and academic extension programmes after school with the help of subject teachers (English, Maths, Science and IT). Coordinate extension activities and participation in competitions with external agencies.
- Create a gifted and talented register for both academic and non-academic subjects.



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- Train all teaching staff across the school in identifying and facilitating opportunities for gifted and talented students.
- Provide awareness and training sessions for Parents regarding the Gifted and Talented programme and their role in identifying / supporting their children
- Ensure the ethical responsibility of informing parents about their child's identification and induction into this cohort and seek their support and engagement to further their child's advancement.
- Encourage students identified as gifted and talented in areas outside of school like tennis, swimming, piano etc. and highlight their achievements in Student Spotlight or a similar forum.

The Head of Inclusion will:

- Review the gifted and talented policy on a yearly basis.
- Ensure that the gifted and talented programme is well incorporated within the whole school Inclusion approach.
- Ensure that the Gifted and Talented Coordinator implements the policy and coordinates the monitoring progress.
- Ensure that the governing body and the SLT are well aware of the provisions in place for gifted and talented students.
- Ensure that the Learning Support Assistants and Learning Support Teachers as well as all teaching staff are well trained in working with gifted and talented students.
- Ensure that the additional needs of students who fall into both the G and T and SEND categories (Twice-exceptional) are met in a coordinated way across the staff who support them
- Ensure that the gifted and talented policy is available on the school websites and all parents are aware of the Gifted and Talented programme in the school.

The Role of the teacher:

- Take responsibility for providing everyday provision to gifted and talented students in order that they achieve their potential and in order to challenge them successfully within the classroom environment and beyond.
- Work with the subject leader in ensuring that the individual educational needs of students identified as gifted or talented are well incorporated within the curriculum and the learning plans.
- Effectively formulate the Advanced Learning Plan with SMART goals and detailed provisions for gifted and talented students along with the Gifted and Talented Coordinator.



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- Facilitate the students to have self awareness, recognise learning gaps, develop the ability to self direct and close gaps before moving on to new goals of learning
- Ensure students know the standard they are aiming for, actively seek out feedback to reach that standard, and have the tools to move their own learning forward.
- Effectively implement the identification process for gifted and talented and widen the parameters to include previously unexplored potential students.
- Be aware of all students on the Gifted and Talented register within their year group and subject area.

Role of the parent:

- Parents are always very important stakeholders within the school in the education of their child. Their consent and approval will be required to identify their child as gifted and talented. Their role in identifying their child's giftedness and talent is welcomed and supported.
- Parents have a responsibility to make sure that their child identified as Gifted and Talented is encouraged to work to his/her full potential.
- There should be effective communication through the Google Classroom between parents and the school to make sure that the school is well aware of the support provided to the child at home.
- Parents will play an integral role in formulating their child's Advanced Learning Plan and attend meetings as necessary for the purpose of making and updating the ALP.
- Parents will complete the gifted and talented checklist to help the school in planning effectively for their child.
- Parents will update the school on any achievement and recognition received by their child outside of the school.

Role of the student:

- The school will make sure that gifted and talented students are involved in setting their own targets to provide them with enrichment within the school.
- Gifted and Talented Students will identify their own strengths and areas of interest to plan their targets accordingly.
- A gifted and talented learner will work on his/her independent project with creative ideas using their strengths and abilities.
- Students will write regular reflections on their experience within the gifted and talented programme.



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This policy should be read in conjunction with the School Inclusion Policy

Appendix

Format of an ALP:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bz-z1u80BopSCpSgKN9-3xc4fIHOFYRJerIfDss8xMM/edit?usp=sharing>

Student input form:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1GPVGC-fP9J7NBIBsZsIgfqe_EtglFVieGctSSLaMEDk/edit?usp=sharing

FS/KS1 checklist:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSel6RZ_-1p9KJ8lLyF_FXEQ4Btm-1bNneuSB9vrlcP2RerMw/viewform

Year 3 checklist:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1W8eJOkmhBPjzneATzIrcV166j5ZaDWklbMHM5ojVUAI/preview>

KS2/KS3/KS4 checklist:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfgfSHbhHhCV8O3eG4SohfN9u-59OFIWmq7lqsQrLpOXG-Aig/viewform?usp=header>

Parent checklist:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1JpFIICINFzgREliBnYDJU_JoEOqEeXztvH3A5-YqYVg/edit?usp=sharing

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ORVXDQCOKP-8hkkDkcXebNqZ64DiMNC-uWDe5fluaU8/edit?usp=sharing>