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Extension Studies Programme

RATIONALE:

Macleans College recognises that there are some students who have potential and talents that would cause them to be classified as having exceptional abilities. These abilities need to be recognised, valued and catered for appropriately as these students are complex individuals with a range of intellectual and emotional needs which we must aim to meet and nurture in the school setting. As a learning community working in partnership with parents, we seek to identify, understand and enrich our students in a safe, supportive environment that integrates their academic, social, emotional and ethical development. Their right to this provision is contained within the National Education Guidelines.

Whilst our main goal is to help them achieve academically and become life-long learners, we strive to do so by taking into account the whole child and their experience of the world, guiding them to become global citizens who are able to build relationships and use their gifts for the betterment of themselves and others.

Students displaying special academic ability must be guided. They need emotional support, comprehensive information about career education and specialised strategies that can help raise and maintain high standards. They need to be nourished by providing stimulating material and suitable programmes to help them gain the confidence to pursue their passions and change the world; to think, feel and learn in ways that enhance their own humanity and that of others; to accept their diversity and that of others; to achieve great things as a learner, a pioneer and a person of value to their community, both locally and globally

A staff member will be appointed to manage the programme.

DEFINITION:

Students with exceptional abilities are people who demonstrate or have the potential to demonstrate, well above average abilities, creativity and task commitment. They have the potential ability to achieve new insights. Such abilities may be found among all ethnicities and cultures, in all socio-economic groups and in a wide variety of human activities. The criteria for potential that is valued and nurtured at Macleans College relate directly to the corner stones of Macleans College. Contained within this domain of recognised criteria are the academic, cultural, socio-affective, leadership, creative and kinaesthetic fields.

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PURPOSES OF THE EXTENSION STUDIES PROGRAMME AT MACLEANS COLLEGE:

- 1 To identify students with exceptional abilities.
- 2 To develop a responsive environment in which students' talents will surface and to provide enhancement and acceleration programmes that will broaden their learning and personal development.
- 3 To recognise the wide range of abilities and interests that these students have and to further develop these abilities through a challenging learning programme.
- 4 To encourage high levels of thinking, critical evaluation and creative problem solving.
- 5 To place academically able students together in intellectually and socially challenging peer groups.
- 6 To provide for appropriate acceleration, enhancement and extension opportunities.

IDENTIFICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH HIGH ACADEMIC ABILITY AT MACLEANS COLLEGE:

Identification may include:

- CEM Placement, PATs, ASTLE results
- A written creative and critical thinking assessment
- Teacher knowledge and intuition – including teachers from contributing schools
- Parent checklist
- Student portfolio and achievements

It may also include:

- Creative/Intelligence/Socio-affective evidence
- Self referral
- School assessments
- Peer nomination

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Identification processes should:

- 1 Be inclusive – to accommodate as wide a group of students as possible.
- 2 Be a flexible and continuous process to allow for the recognition of gifts and talents.
- 3 Begin identification prior to entry at Year 9 but for identification to continue throughout Years 9 and 10, and Year 11, 12 and 13 for acceleration and inclusion in the Scholarship programme.
- 4 Gather information from a variety of sources, including classroom teacher observation and assessment as well as knowledge gained from others – eg parents, peers, and other teachers.
- 5 Be as unobtrusive as possible and a natural part of the students’ learning environment.
- 6 Be alert to the hidden gifted or under-represented groups. These include: minority groups, different ethnic groups, under-achievers, twice-exceptional, those with learning, sensory and physical difficulties, those with social difficulties and those from lower socio-economic groups.

Guidelines

- 1 For 2018 one extension class of students who have all-round exceptional academic ability will be selected at Year 9.
- 2 One other class of students with ability in a range of learning areas will be selected for enhancement, not acceleration.
- 3 Additional students and students new to the school may be added to these classes on the basis of proven performance and a written creative, critical thinking assessment.
- 4 Students will be reassessed annually as to their suitability for the class. The continued participation in the programme is dependent upon attainment, attitude and effort.
 - If student attainment, attitude and effort is not commensurate with the expected levels of the programme then the student/situation will be assessed by the co-ordinator of the Extension Studies programme. If there is deemed to be an issue then actions

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appropriate to the individual student/situation will be taken. This may include partial or complete removal from the programme/additional support or subject assistance.

- 5 a) The programme shall be overseen for Years 9 and 10. The elements of the programme co-ordinator's responsibilities include:
- An enrichment programme in the core subjects.
 - Co-ordination of off-site activities, at times partly funded by the students.
 - To ensure acceleration where appropriate and after consultation with the relevant head of department, senior management team and parents.
 - To assist in the provision of enrichment in other curriculum areas.
 - At least one foreign language shall be studied for Year 9.
 - Ensure that an appropriate breadth of co-curricular activity is undertaken.
 - Assist in the professional development of staff involved in the programme.
 - Students in the accelerate Year 9 class will study Future Problem Solving for a semester.
- b) From Year 11 onward, students in this programme choose a course of study that suits their aspirations and ability. This can include acceleration in subjects of strength. In Year 12 and 13 students can enrich their course of qualification by undertaking Scholarship.
- 6 Macleans College shall provide appropriate role models and mentors who will enhance the learning of the students in the programme. The appropriate role models and mentors should be both staff and peers. The form teacher will play a pivotal role in the emotional wellbeing of students and where appropriate the Student Advisory Service and the Learning Support team may be involved. Therefore staffing of the form teacher and core subject teachers shall be of a selective nature appropriate to the needs of the students.
- 7 Staff will be encouraged to participate in professional development to improve and develop skills in the necessary areas. The programme co-ordinator will also assist in professional development of staff.
- 8 There is an expectation that these students will ultimately prepare themselves for a scholarship programme or equivalent.

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- 9 Heads of Faculty will ensure that where appropriate, their schemes of work recognise the special character and the needs of this group. To this end, they will develop skills, attitudes and values that are appropriate and seek to use a full range of assessment strategies suited to the students' needs and abilities.
- 10 A letter of acceptance into the programme shall be sent to the parent(s), including statements about the student's responsibilities and their placement will be reviewed.

Annual Identification Process – some identifiers that can be used

Term One:

- Referrals from staff and testing as required for mainstream students with exceptional ability
- Identified students to be tagged in school database.
- Review and feedback from department/houses/teachers in relation to progress

Term Two:

- Teachers asked to identify high potential students based on performance/checklist for inclusion in Year 10.
- Review and feedback from department/houses/teachers in relation to progress

Term Three:

- Review and feedback from department/houses/teachers in relation to progress

Term Four:

- Review of process and changes made if necessary
- Visit contributing schools and obtain data, conduct placement tests, parental checklist.
- Data processing Term 4 / Term 1
- Beginning of the identification process for incoming Year 9s (testing, parental referral, school referral and portfolios).