



# Exceptional Children

*& how to find them*

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The Head Office

# Gifted....

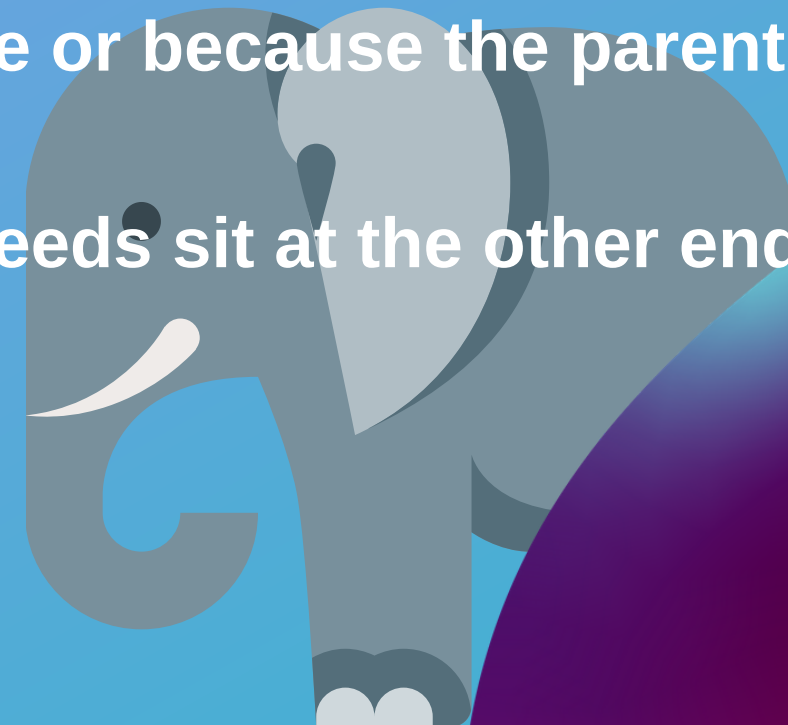
Let's address the elephant in the room:

What a terrible word! It stirs up so many preconceived ideas about elitism, privilege and success. It often hinders a conversation more than it helps. But...

It's the term used by the Ministry of Education, psychologists and found in studies & research.

Let's look past the label and focus on the children who need our help - because these children are neuro-diverse, with advanced yet complex learning needs. Children who's brains are simply wired differently and this is not their choice or because the parents are pushy.

A gifted child is a child with special needs - just that those needs sit at the other end of the spectrum.





**A programme for  
students with advanced  
yet complex learning  
needs**

You can find this video on our website:  
[www.theheadoffice.org.nz/the-curriculum](http://www.theheadoffice.org.nz/the-curriculum)

# INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

## WHY DO WE TALK ABOUT THIS?

- Wellbeing
- Understanding of self
- Acceptance of differences and strengths
- Enabling of self-advocacy

## HOW DO WE DO THIS?

- Unpack what it means to be a neurodiverse learner
- Perfectionism
- Underachievement
- Imposter syndrome
- Intensities
- Discuss expectations of others

*Although we often define gifted students by their intelligence, it's their social and emotional needs that are often the biggest challenge.*

*Ian Byrd, [Byrdseed.com](http://Byrdseed.com)*

# What our programme is not...



- An extension programme for Maths, Science or Literacy
- Genius club
- Hot-housing
- Acceleration
- A programme for students with good grades

## GIFTEDNESS IS

Asynchronous development in which advanced abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm.

(The Columbus group)

## GIFTEDNESS IS NOT

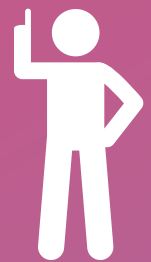
Gifted children will not be successful regardless.  
What do we need to do to ensure they will thrive?

Being gifted does not mean 'being good at everything' or high achieving in school.

It can go hand in hand with a learning difficulty like Dyslexia or ASD - Twice (or Multiple) Exceptionality.



# Definition



# Why do they need help?

## MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Asynchronous development often causes inner frustrations for the child, makes parenting and teaching difficult
- Out of step with age peers - difference in abilities, interests, vocabulary and sense of humour
- Lack of meaningful friendships, isolation, bullying

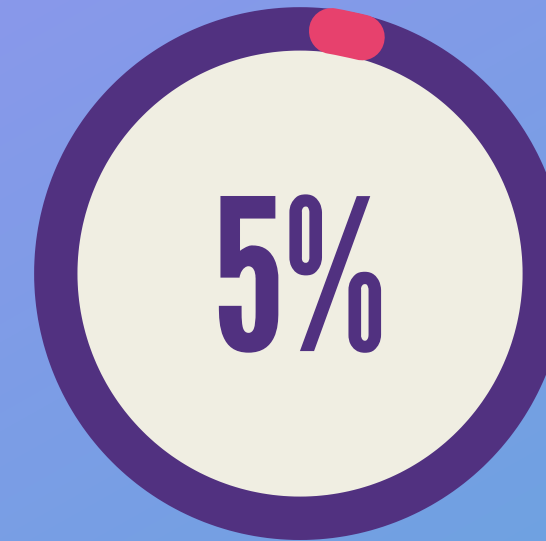
## UNDERACHIEVEMENT

- Hiding true abilities for fear of standing out - especially for girls
- Perfectionism, risk-aversion and overthinking can lead to outcomes well below their potential and abilities.

## DISENGAGEMENT FROM SCHOOL

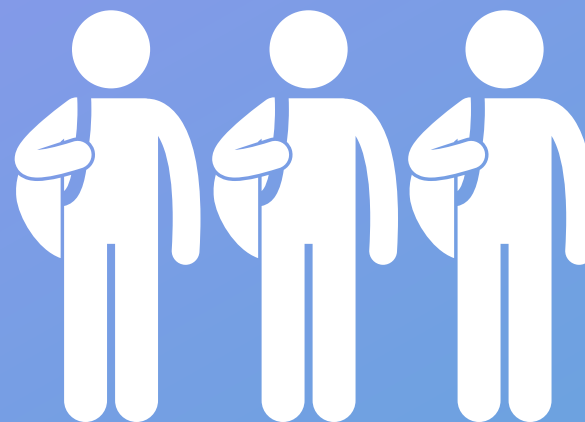
- Content presented too slowly, not deep enough to be challenged, learning already mastered
- Can lead to boredom, behaviour issues and drop out

# FIRST... WE NEED TO FIND THEM



## NEW ZEALAND

Population: just over 5 Million, over 250,000 among them are gifted.



## SCHOOL POPULATION

New Zealand schools have a total student population of 816,682, 40,800 would identify as gifted. (2019)



## TARANAKI

Our region has 21,561 students enrolled in years 1 - 13. 1,078 children could be identified as gifted. (2019)

# DOMAINS OF GIFTEDNESS



## SPORTS

Every single All Black, Valerie Adams, Usain Bolt, Peter Burling



## ARTS & PERFORMANCE

Pablo Picasso, Judy Dench, Freddy Mercury, Mozart, Frida Kahlo



## LEADERSHIP & INTERPERSONAL

Mahatma Ghandi, Barack Obama, Mother Teresa, Napoleon Bonaparte



## ACADEMIC

Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Marie Curie, Catherine Johnson, Elon Musk, Michelle Dickinson



## CULTURAL

Tohu Kākahi & Te Whiti o Rongomai,

# TRAITS OF GIFTEDNESS & IDENTIFICATION



## VOCABULARY & SENSE OF HUMOUR

Unusually advanced language skills for his/her age, often avid readers, comfortable with complex reading material, advanced sense of humour, picks up subtleties that others don't notice



## CURIOSITY, MEMORY & KNOWLEDGE

asks endless and insightful questions, unusually focused when interested, advanced recall of facts, points out connections, uses and adapts information



## SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SKILLS

empathetic, reads body language well, sensitive to others feelings, often relates better to older children or adults, can be easily frustrated by behaviour of others



## INTENSE INTERESTS & JOY OF LEARNING

quickly grasps new concepts and makes connections using deep thinking; is passionate, shows unwavering attention sometimes to the point of stubbornness; sits patiently when reading or listening to books



## SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

leadership abilities, heightened sense of justice, Manaakitanga (giving mana to people thus maintaining your own), Kaitiakitanga (guardianship of knowledge, environment and resources), Rangatiratanga (leadership that inspires unity)

Remembers the answers



poses unforeseen questions and sees exceptions

Is attentive



is selectively engaged, daydreams, may seem off-task

generates advanced ideas



generates complex, abstract ideas often plenty of them

works hard to achieve



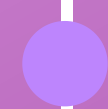
knows without working hard, plays with ideas and concepts

Gets A's



may not be motivated by grades

absorbs information



manipulates information and improvises

learns with ease



already knows, questions 'what if...'

performs at the top of the group



is beyond the group or is it's own group

enjoys the company of age peers



prefers the company of intellectual or creative peers but often works alone

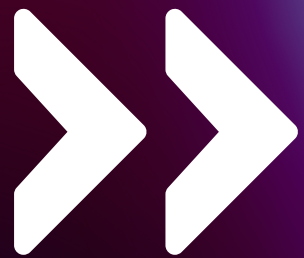
High Achiever

VERSUS

Gifted

## CENTRAL TARANAKI

- Building of relationships with local Kahui Ako and Learning Support Coordinators
- Support educators with identification
- Set up of additional Head Office classes in a Central Taranaki location
- Secure funding to assist with costs for schools and families



## WHAT NEXT?



The  
Head  
Office.



## FOR ANY QUESTIONS....

Please get in touch, our Head Office team would love to hear from you:



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[www.theheadoffice.org.nz](http://www.theheadoffice.org.nz)



The Head Office Taranaki

*Thank you for your time*