

High Potential and Gifted Education in NSW public schools – a guide for parents and carers

High Potential and Gifted Education (HPGE) helps all students in NSW public schools stay interested and challenged in their learning by meeting their specific learning needs. It focuses on 4 domains (types) of potential: creative, intellectual, physical, and social-emotional.

The 4 domains of potential

The domains of potential are 4 main types of natural abilities people may have. They often overlap and are highly influenced by one another. These are the domains:

Creative domain – refers to abilities that use imagination, originality and coming up with new ideas. These abilities may be seen in children through the way they write a short story, compose a song, draw a poster, develop a unique solution to a maths problem, or choreograph a dance.

Intellectual domain – refers to abilities in understanding complex ideas, solving problems and applying knowledge. For example, a child may learn quickly and easily, or show a deep understanding of philosophy, science or books.

Physical domain – refers to natural abilities in human movement. For example, during sporting activities, sewing, carpentry or engineering. These abilities may be noticed in the classroom and playground, as well as through extra-curricular school and community opportunities and competitions.

Social-emotional domain – refers to abilities in managing their emotions and relating to others. These abilities may be demonstrated through interactions with classmates, teachers, and parents or carers. For example, a child may be very confident and good at leading and working with others, or show entrepreneurial skills.

How schools support high potential and gifted students

A child's potential can vary, so they may require different kinds of support and teaching. For example:

High potential students are those whose ability is higher than students of the same age, and they can benefit from being challenged more.

Gifted students have very high ability compared to students of the same age and can develop their talent quickly and easily when given opportunities.

Highly gifted students have exceptional ability and may need significant adjustments to meet their advanced learning needs.

Schools support high potential and gifted students through a variety of teaching practices and programs. These may include:

- lessons that challenge and inspire students
- enrichment activities and extra-curricular programs
- grouping students with others of similar ability
- advanced learning pathways such as acceleration (moving through the curriculum faster) when appropriate
- support for wellbeing and social skills development.

The goal is to help students move from high potential to high performance – whether that's in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, languages, the arts, sport, leadership or another area.

Every student is unique

Students with high potential can come from any background, including those with disabilities or from different backgrounds and language groups. Some do very well at school already, while others might need extra help to do their best. It's a common misunderstanding that gifted students don't need support as some may need specific help to stay interested and do well at school.

What to do if you believe your child has high potential or may be gifted

If you think that your child may have high potential or may be gifted, please discuss this with your child's teacher. When you talk to the teacher, please give examples of what your child does that may be signs of high potential or giftedness in any of the domains.

Parents and carers play an important role by being involved in their child's learning, sharing insights about their child and working in partnership with the school.

HPGE policy

[The High Potential and Gifted Education Policy](#) is used in every public school across NSW. It helps teachers assess and identify what high potential and gifted students need and how to provide them with opportunities to grow and succeed.

Where to get more information

- Every public school in NSW offers HPGE activities. Please refer to your child's school website for more details.
- You may wish to talk to your child's teachers to ask how the school supports high potential and gifted learners.
- Visit the [Department's High Potential and Gifted Education](#) website to explore the policy and resources.

Telephone interpreter service

If you need interpreter assistance to talk to your child's school about high potential and gifted education, please call 131 450, tell the operator what language you need and ask them to phone the school.

The operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with your conversation. You will not be charged for this service.