

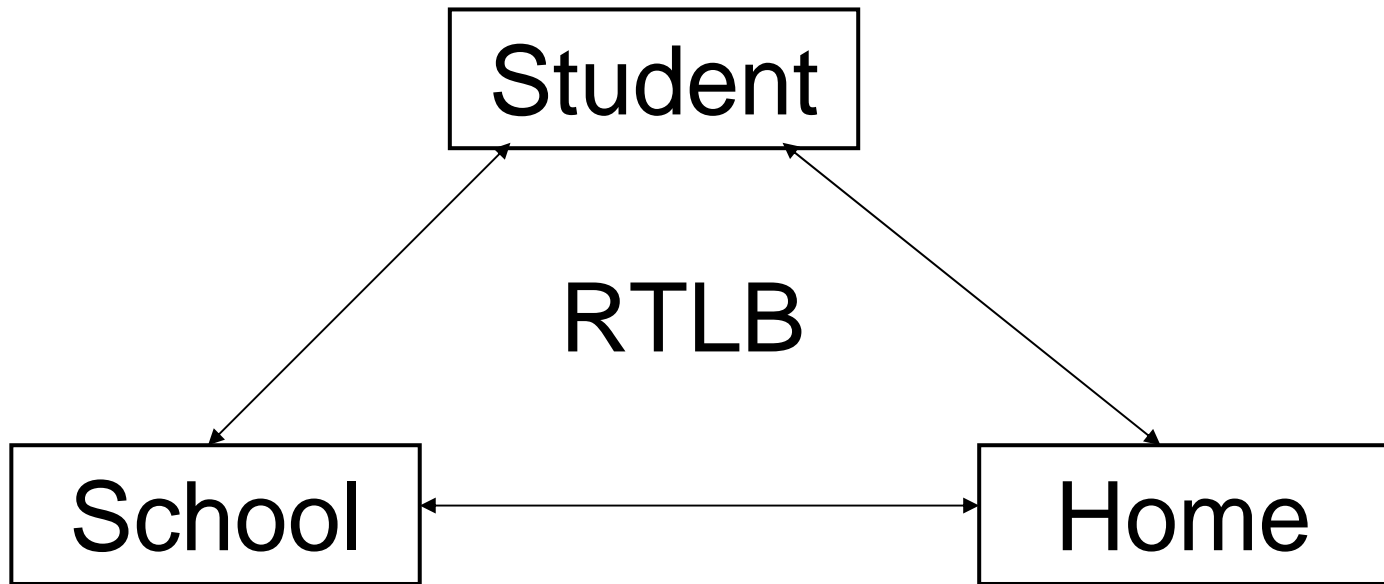
A Flotation Device for Schools



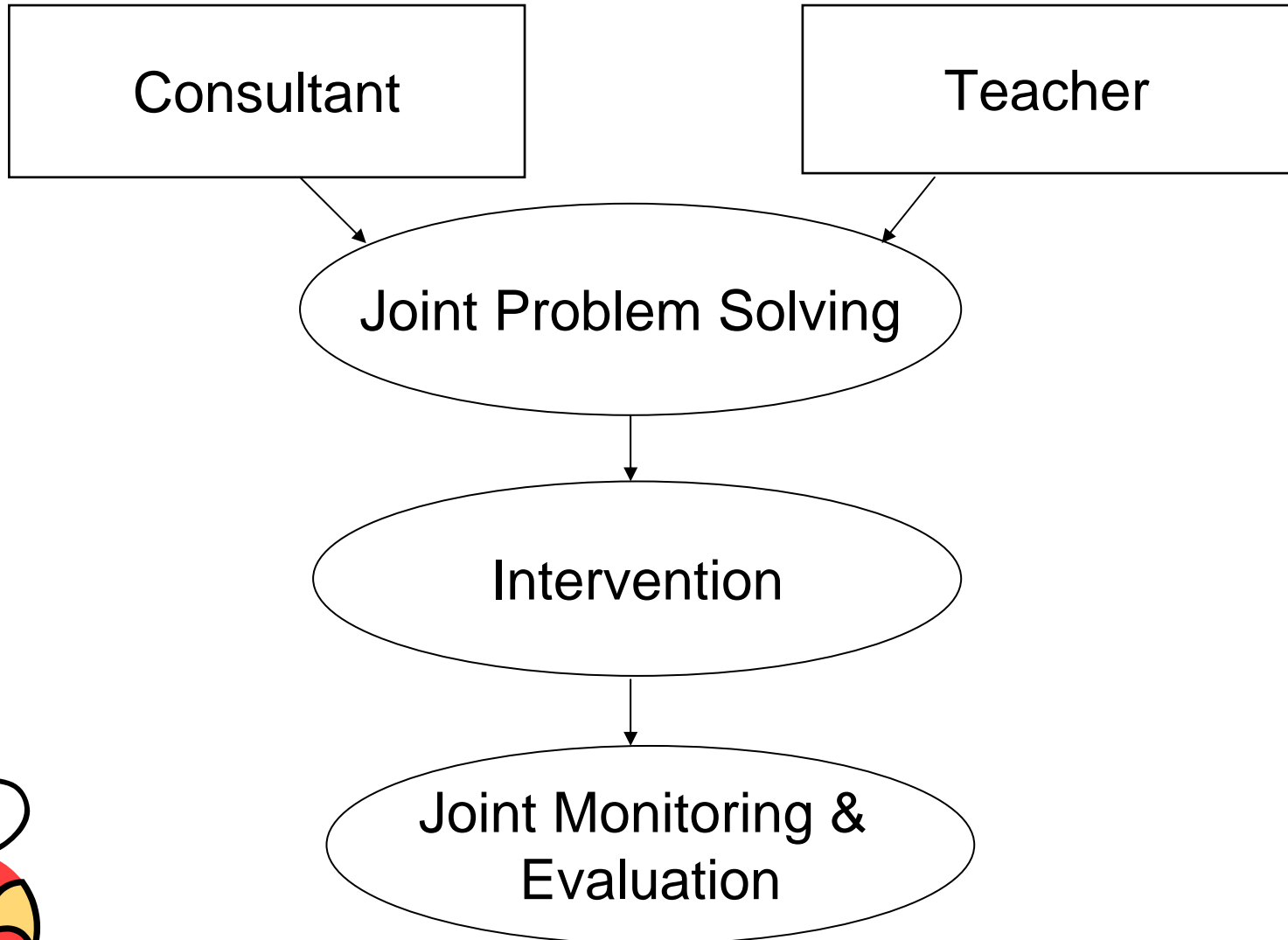
How One RTLB Cluster Supports Schools within Gifted Education

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The Total Learning Environment



Collaborative Model



RTLB Role

- Work collaboratively with students, their families and school (partnerships established and strengthened)
- Support schools in developing their own gifted definition and identification procedures (multi-dimensional)
- Assist teachers with programming- in the classroom; pull out options
- Have individual; small groups of students on our rolls

Fendalton RTL B Cluster

- Open-minded philosophy
- Search for new solutions
- Questioning / problem solving
- Evidence-based practice
- Reflective practitioners
- Strong team focus
- Involvement in development and marking of CCE Gifted qualification
- Current ODS assessment team for Christchurch
- NZAGC involvement (Christchurch Explorers)

Learning Goal (2005 - 2006): Gifted Education

- Professional Development
- Assessment
- Identification procedures
- WJ III training
- Trialled RTLB gifted training programme
(Rosemary Cathcart & Lynn Berresford)

What are the Ministry of Education Requirements?

- National Administrative Guidelines (2004)
- **NAG 1:**
Each Board through the principal and staff is required to:
 - (i) Develop and implement teaching and learning programmes:
 - (a) to provide all students in Years 1 – 10 with opportunities to achieve for success in all the essential learning areas of the New Zealand Curriculum.
 - (iii) On the basis of good quality assessment information identify students and groups of students
 - (c) who have special education needs (including gifted and talented)

Syndicate or School Wide Professional Development

- Assisting schools with meeting the NAG change for Gifted and Talented students.
- Professional development programme (6 modules):
 - understanding giftedness
 - identification of gifted students
 - social and emotional development of gifted students
 - understanding underachievement in gifted students
 - curriculum differentiation for gifted students
 - developing programmes and provisions for gifted students

GERRIC, 2004

Support Schools to Review Current Procedures and Practices

- Teams meet to discuss NAG requirements and the changes required to school philosophy and programming
- Assisting schools to meet the NAG requirement
- Collaborating on staff needs (programming, professional development and budget)
- Involved with Gifted Committees at primary, intermediate and secondary levels

Supporting Individual Teachers

- Assessment of student / longitudinal data considered
- Collaborative decision making / interventions
- Formulating programmes with the class teacher
- Working with the student individually or in a group setting
- Referral to outside agencies

Individual Students or Small Groups

- Work with children individually
 - lucid ability screen
 - skill based session (eg x trainer- visual spatial skills)
 - memory programmes
 - organisational skills
- Work with children in a group setting
 - Social skills (e.g. social stories, team work)
 - High school transition programme (alleviates anxiety, routines)
 - Research / Study Skills (e.g. twice exceptional boys, produce work at higher level without extensive writing)

Outside Agencies

- Occupational Therapists - overexcitabilities, sensory issues
- Behavioural Optometrist
- SPELD/ Seabrook McKenzie - twice exceptional students
- Speech Language Therapists
- Audiologists - Central Auditory Processing Assessments
- Educational Psychologists
- Counsellors
- Health Nurse
- The George Parkyn Centre - One Day School
- NZAGC

Case Studies

- **New Entrant Boy** – frustration / school assessment difficult to complete / low work output / high anxiety
- **Overactive Girl** – described as having ADHD behaviour by school / anxiety symptoms / inconsistent home – school reports / low work output
- **Underachieving Boy** – suspected high ability / unrecognised sensory needs masking ability / incomplete work / behaviour issues / high anxiety – referral to child mental health team

What is behind the behaviour?

- **Boredom** – programming / timetabling / no point
- **Frustration / Perfectionism / Risk taking**
- **Inner struggle** - understanding why feel / think differently from peers
- **Social pressure** - to conform / fit in
- **Learning disability** - creative ideas but lack fine motor skill
- **Cultural differences / mismatch** - forced choice dilemma
- **Expectations** - too high / low

Gifted Characteristics

Enabling

- Excellent verbal skills
- Original and creative thinking
- Alertness and curiosity
- Flexibility in problem solving
- Learning quickly
- Able to generalise learning
- Mature / quirky sense of humour
- Excellent memory
- Leadership ability
- Imaginative
- Independent

Clark (2002)

Disabling

- Social isolation / lack of social skills
- Inattentiveness / hyperactivity
- Perfectionism / unrealistic goals
- Incomplete assignments
- Poor fine motor skills / co-ordination
- Supersensitivity – to particular senses, issues, emotions
- Excessive criticism
- Low self-esteem
- Frustration at classroom demands / dominating

Whitmore (1986)

Year 1- male (5 years)

Background Data

- Lived in another country as a preschooler
- Significant sensory needs (particularly auditory)
- Exceptional memory
- Advanced visual spatial skills
- Prefers adult / older children's company
- Spoke in complex sentences prior to 2 yrs - verbally precocious
- Has had a number of 'obsessions' - moon, sharks, tornadoes

- Exceptional gross motor skills – swimming, running, games etc
- Inappropriate sounds in the classroom
- Extremely active, fidgety, varied concentration
- Poor fine motor skills - avoids writing, drawing etc
- Has to be the leader in groups, or won't participate
- Frequently rebellious, disobedient, difficult to manage
- Attends school part-days

Assessments

- **Visual spatial game** - advanced ability demonstrated with memory
- **Student interview** - magic wand; if I could change one thing about school...
- **Parent interview / questionnaire** - preschool; current
- **Teacher interview / questionnaire** - review of longitudinal data / school entry information / reading records etc
- **Observations** - in the classroom - structured / unstructured sessions; not using a lot of reading strategies; perfectionism
- **Cognitive profile** - sound pre-reading skills; 99% sound discrimination; strong visual processing skills; WJ III 95%

Conclusions

- Needs short, clear instructions
- Use visual prompts / cues - timetable
- Support, scaffold to learn the 'rules' of school
- Focus on short, obtainable learning goals (ILP)
- Build choice into the programme - e.g. pencil / felt
- Encourage participation / don't force
- Allow student to see teacher / parent risk-taking
- Offer topics of interest and read to student
- Type story - focus on ideas not lack of motor skills
- OT programme ongoing - breaks in school day

Year 3- Female (8 yrs)

Background Data

- Very fidgety and distractible
- Poor listening; missing instructions
- Difficulty with reading
- Poor maths skills
- Reluctant writer with messy handwriting
- Avoids written tasks at every opportunity

- Always busy – multi-tasking
- Very verbal, inquisitive, observant
- Holds adult level conversations
- Sophisticated sense of humour
- Messy bedroom – could find everything
- Very sensitive – anxious with disbelievers
- Sensitive to others feelings and needs
- Could do things quickly – didn't respond to time barriers

Assessments

School - Below age results in all areas; phonological awareness

Home - Many indicators of high ability

Behavioural Optometrist - Eye tracking / convergence/ visual attention

Seabrook McKenzie - (SLD) Weakness in motor skills, visual perception & memory

Occupational Therapy - Hyposensitive, accident prone, poor visual-motor integration and visual perceptual skills

George Parkyn Centre (One Day School) - WJ III; Large discrepancy between Thinking Ability (93rd percentile) & Cognitive Efficiency (26th percentile)

CDHB (Whakatata House) - WISC-IV; Statistically significant differences between Processing Speed (92nd percentile) & Working Memory (9th percentile)

Conclusion

Interventions

- Change of class (2005)
- Teacher-aide phonological programme
- Reading with specialist literacy teacher
- Referral to behavioural optometrist
- SPELD assessment (Suggested sensory issues rather than SLD).
- Occupational therapy assessment and programme
- One Day School application
- New class (2006); sympathetic teacher
- Out of school tuition - Kip McGrath

Outcomes

- Happier child; reduced school avoidance
- Less distractible behaviour in class
- More work completed

Year 5- Male (11 Yrs)

Background Data

Student referred for Gifted & Talented assessment for a student with possible learning needs

- slow attending to instructions / attention span
- work avoidance / wandering around room
- not completing work
- low self esteem
- lack of friends / annoys others
- seen as unmotivated / lazy
- reluctant writer / untidy printscript
- highly anxious
- overweight
- reading 14-15+ years

Assessments

- **Classroom observations**
 - low 'on task' behaviour (40%)
 - Frequently out of seat (wandering around the room, annoying other students, in and out of desk, stretching, sharpening pencil, looking around room etc)
 - Can become deeply absorbed in an activity
 - Enjoys out of class activities (choir / guitar)
 - Highly anxious / motor tics noticed / unhappy
- **Woodcock-Johnson III** (94th percentile)
- **Referral to Occupational Therapist** due to concerns about degree of task endurance, disorganised writing, auditory difficulties, distractibility and poor eye-hand coordination
- **Referral to Child Mental Health** due to high levels of anxiety, low level of self esteem & motor tics

Occupational Therapy Assessment

Sensory Processing Difficulties

- Difficulties with:
 - the vestibular system not processing information about movement
 - processing auditory information
 - muscle endurance & muscle tone
 - inattention & distractibility

Motor Skills

- **Assessment revealed:**
 - difficulty maintaining fully extended and flexed position against gravity
 - moves and changes physical position when writing / low muscle endurance may explain:
 - out of seat behaviour
 - low work completion
 - dislike of all written work
 - Below peer group in visual motor integration skills. Difficulties explain:
 - out of seat behaviour
 - finishing work in allocated time span,
 - poor spacing,
 - difficulty staying on the lines when writing, and
 - poor eye-hand coordination

Conclusion

Modifications made to classroom

- dyn-air cushion, reduced pencil work
- acceptance of students ability and difficulties

Modifications to programme

- referral to 'One Day School' programme
- tailoring tasks to meet student needs
- allowing movement when necessary
- auditory needs targeted (visuals, short clear instructions, timetable)
- motor endurance assisted with use of computer
- student allowed to dictate writing when possible
- extra time when writing was necessary / untidy work was accepted
- student given 'choice' of activities and presentation of information
- OT programme ongoing / movement needed regularly during day
- teacher encouraged to try 'narrative therapy' using emails



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