

## ALPHA Initiative Policy

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*This policy was written to demonstrate the commitment of Alphington Grammar School to provide opportunities for gifted and talented students in Years 7 and 8. The ALPHA Initiative, also known as Accelerated Learning Programs for High Achievers, will be offered to highly capable Year 7 and 8 students during Term One of each year.*

### 1. Aim:

- 1.1. The central aim to the ALPHA Initiative is to provide each student with an exceptional educational experience, specifically targeted towards those with outstanding academic abilities. These students are highly capable students with high expectations and academic performance who will benefit from an accelerated and enriched learning program.
- 1.2. The main objective of the ALPHA Initiative is to develop students who are highly skilled independent learners, who are creative and possess extensive research capabilities, who work seamlessly in a collaborative environment and who are confident members of our school community.

### 2. Structure:

- 2.1. The ALPHA Initiative allows the selected students the opportunity to extend and enhance their learning, based on their individual interests in STEM and EHASS.
- 2.2. The curriculum and projects conducted by the ALPHA students are based around developing higher order thinking skills, promotion of creativity, development of their research skills, but most importantly providing them with the opportunities to enhance and accelerate their learning through various and exciting opportunities.
- 2.3. The ALPHA Initiative is an innovative program which puts Alphington Grammar School at the forefront of accelerated learning, with student-centred and having individualised learning programs.
- 2.4. ALPHA students have approximately four (4) periods per cycle where they are removed from class to spend time working on curriculum, a project or topic of interest.
- 2.5. Electives, PE and Sport will not be impacted by the removal of the ALPHA students from classes. English, Humanities, Science, Maths and Languages will have some impact, but a staggered withdrawal will not affect one subject area above another.

### 3. Selection:

- 3.1. All incoming Year 7 students are currently tested prior to commencing Year 7 using Edutest Verbal Reasoning, Numerical Reasoning, Reading Comprehension and Mathematics. Students who achieve a test score of 92% or above for two (2) or more assessments in classwork across English, Mathematics and Science are tentatively selected for the ALPHA Initiative.
- 3.2. The class assessments from the first five (5) weeks of Term One will also be used to inform the battery of tests already available. This ensures a more valid selection process as there will be several assessment points to use.
- 3.3. Students currently in Year 8 are selected through a similar process but Semester 1 and 2 reports from the previous year are also used. Students who maintain an average of 92% or above for two (2) or more subjects in classwork across English, Mathematics or Science may be eligible for selection for the ALPHA Initiative.

### 4. Student expectations:

- 4.1. Students are expected to keep up with their work and to catch up on what they have missed if they have attended an ALPHA lesson or excursion.



- 4.2. Any student who falls behind in their classwork or achieves a result on an assessment task below what is expected of them will be required to have a discussion with the Head of ALPHA.
- 4.3. ALPHA Initiative students are expected to be role models within the School and therefore their behaviour both in and out of class is expected to be impeccable. Any student whose behavior deteriorates will be removed from the ALPHA Initiative on a temporary basis until their behaviour improves. This is a decision which will be made by the Assistant Principal. Parents/Parent Liaison of the student will be informed as well as the student.
- 4.4. Students in the ALPHA Initiative will be expected to participate in extra curricula activities such as academic competitions, instrumental music, sports, public speaking, debating, etc.
- 4.5. Students will also have the opportunity and will be highly encouraged to participate in leadership and mentoring programs such as House Leaders, School Captains, Future School Leaders and peer counselling.
- 4.6. Students who have fallen behind in their classwork or have received a grade on an assessment that is lower than expected will meet with the Head of ALPHA to discuss options. These options could include:
  - removal from ALPHA on an interim basis to improve on classwork;
  - removal from only some ALPHA lessons so that the student can focus on one particular subject area; and
  - removal from ALPHA permanently as the student is unable to cope with the pressure of the program.

## **5. Staff expectations:**

- 5.1. Staff will be expected to monitor ALPHA students closely in regard to their academic achievements as well as their behaviour, which includes their mental and social wellbeing. If any student shows signs of being under too much pressure or being overworked, staff are to alert the Head of ALPHA for further discussions.