

About the VAGTC

The VAGTC is a parent and educator-led not-for-profit incorporated body that is committed to advocating for the identification and appropriate support, education, and development of gifted potential in children across the state of Victoria.

Meet the President

Mrs Kathy Harrison – President

Master of Education (ICTE), Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Science. Former Coordinator of gifted education in the Compass Centre and Exemplary Teacher at Methodist Ladies' College. 2018 recipient of the Australian Mathematics Trust Teaching Award. A passionate gifted student advocate, enthusiastic about social justice and a community volunteer. Expertise and experience as a VAGTC seminar presenter and exemplar of theory to practice in gifted education.

Committee Biographies

Dr Susan Nikakis – Vice President

Doctorate of Education. Thesis title: "What Makes an Expert Teacher of the Gifted". Senior Gifted Education Officer for Catholic Education Melbourne. A passionate advocate for gifted children, with the mantra 'different not more!!!'

Ms Catherine Frost – Treasurer

Chartered Accountant, Tax Advisor, Bachelor of Business/Arts (Swinburne University). A parent who is passionate about schools and the wider community understanding what gifted mean

and that in the future every teacher understands the importance of wellbeing and that gifted and talented children need to be challenged at school.

Ms Claire Reid – Secretary

Claire has a BA, BEd, and an MA (Gifted). She has a long-term interest in the area of Gifted Education, and several years of experience writing programs, running events and teaching in the area. During her master's thesis in 2015, she researched the positive social and emotional "flow on effects" of grouping gifted students together for academic purposes. She has a particular interest in supporting the "whole child" when it comes to educating gifted students. More recently she has worked teaching gifted English students right across Victoria in the Victorian High Ability Program. She was involved in writing the program.

Ms Amy Horneman

Master of Arts (Applied Linguistics), Bachelor of Arts/Education (Secondary). Amy started her career in education as a Secondary English and German teacher and has ended up delving deeply into the field of Gifted and Talented Education. She is passionate about mentoring gifted and highly able students; developing students in leadership; collaborating with key stakeholders to implement schoolwide provisions; and fostering positive and effective home-school partnerships, including supporting parents in the joys and challenges of parenting their gifted children. She is currently the coordinator of the gifted education program at Scotch College, and is an active committee member (consultant, seminar writer and presenter, and magazine editor) of VAGTC.

Ms Karen Glauser-Edwards

Karen has a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary), Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)(Honours). Currently completing her Master of

Education (Policy in a Global Context) through The University of Melbourne, Karen is committed to raising the awareness of, and access to, educational experiences and pathways for high ability children. Karen's advocacy and research interests target those policies and processes which impact upon the availability and accessibility of educational opportunities for high ability students. In focusing on under-represented populations and groups, her efforts extend to the home educating sector, including dual and incremental home educators.

Mr Simon Gitson

Simon is the Director of Professional Practice at Catholic Regional College North Keilor and joined the VAGTC committee last year. He has been instrumental in exploring improvements to our website. He is currently studying for a doctorate at Monash University. Simon has worked in the Catholic education sector for over a decade and is passionate about creating opportunity and advocacy for gifted and talented students. His expertise includes teaching VCE, the Victorian Curriculum and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years' Program. He has experience working in the NFP sector, leading a community sports club, overseeing 8 staff and 250 members. Skilled in grant writing and digital communication, he has extensive experience running workshops for small and large groups.

Ms Victoria Poulos

Victoria is an enthusiastic advocate for gifted students and their families and has been the G&T coordinator at Hillcrest Christian College for 11 years. She ran a support group for gifted children and their families which was an exciting space to celebrate gifted students. Her current area of passion is in up skilling teachers. She is nearly finished her Masters in Gifted Education at the UNSW.

Ms Bernadette Sheedy

Bernadette has been the gifted coordinator at two secondary schools in Melbourne St Monica's in Epping and Mount Scopus in Burwood. She has presented seminars and papers around the state and the country for the VAGTC and the AAEGT. She is currently working on her PhD with a focus on gifted education at Deakin University.

Ms Laura Wilcox

Laura's has experience in mentoring gifted and talented secondary students in both school and external opportunities. She would bring her perspectives on fulfilling student potential including encouraging collaboration between likeminded students. She believes in triangulating data to identify gifted students. She has a BA (hons) from the University of Melbourne, a Post Grad specialising in Gifted education from Monash University and a Diploma in Prof Communications from the UNE.

History of the Organisation

One of the aims of the VAGTC is to raise the awareness in the educational community of the research evidence that underpins gifted education, creativity, and talent development, and to develop community (families, educators, and policymakers) knowledge and understanding of gifted potential and best practices inside and outside the classroom.

The VAGTC is also committed to raising community awareness and knowledge of the needs of children diagnosed as twice exceptional – gifted potential and with learning challenges or disabilities including appropriate teaching strategies for their talent development. The VAGTC provides professional development programs, conferences, and seminars for educators and families across Victoria.



The VAGTC also promotes collaboration between academics, educators, and psychological experts as well as government agencies and relevant organizations to build awareness and acceptance, and advise on educational policies that support the needs and potential of children and students in Victoria.

As a not-for-profit incorporated body, the VAGTC operates under a constitution and is committed to the following:

- To recognize and identify the existence and needs of the gifted potential of children and students in Victoria and enable their talent development
- To act as a professional association for educators and families interested in supporting and developing gifted potential in children and students
- To encourage and support professional learning for educators and families across Victoria through our DET-supported and other training programs
- To raise the awareness in the educational community of the research evidence that underpins gifted education, creativity and talent development
- To develop educators' knowledge and understanding of gifted children and students and best practices inside and outside the classroom
- To raise awareness and knowledge amongst educators and parents of the needs of gifted students diagnosed as twice exceptional (high potential and with learning challenges) including appropriate teaching strategies for their talent development
- To develop and support educational programs for gifted students
- To promote collaboration between academics, educators,

- and psychological experts as well as government agencies to encourage awareness, acceptance, and support of the needs and potential of children and students in Victoria
- To collaborate with appropriate organizations and agencies to advise on educational policies for gifted children and students
 - To lobby key stakeholders in Victoria including politicians, universities, schools
 - To collaborate and facilitate research on the nature of giftedness to further develop the field of gifted education both in Australia and internationally
 - To maintain contacts with similar organizations and associations within Australia, including acting as Victorian affiliate with the Australian Association for the Education of Gifted and Talented (AAEGT) and the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children (WCGTC)
 - To do all other things which are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above purposes

Our Policies

The VAGTC is committed to upholding best practices and abiding by policies as set out by our Constitution and the laws and regulations of Australia. Ours is a shared commitment to maintain the highest standards of ethics and to reflect the values of the VAGTC in everything we do.

- [View our Privacy Policy](#)
- [View our Child Safe Policy and related documents](#)
- [View our Conflict of Interest policy](#)
- [View our Committee Induction Policy \(Policy No.3\)](#)

