



2014 Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre
385 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne 3051
REGISTERED SCHOOL NUMBER: 2079

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Dale Murray, attest that St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 (Vic), except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2014 school year under the Schools Assistance Act 2008 (Cth) and the Schools Assistance Regulations 2009 (Cth)

22 May 2015

Youth+ Foundation Statement

Youth+ seeks to respond to the needs of young people disenfranchised and disengaged from education. Youth+ provides a place and an opportunity to re-engage in a suitable, flexible learning environment.

Youth+ seeks to build honest and authentic relationships with young people, their families and communities, supporting and celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each person.

Youth+ is guided by the vision of Edmund Rice about the empowering service of education, to achieve personal and community liberation through educational experiences that enable transformation.

St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre Overview

The St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre (SJFLC), is a registered Catholic Specialist Secondary School within the Diocese of Melbourne. SJFLC operates within the policy and compliance framework of the Catholic Education Office Melbourne (CEOM), the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Edmund Rice Education Australia. St. Joseph's FLC is a part of Edmund Rice Education Australia Youth + and is conducted in accordance with the Youth + philosophy and principles. SJFLC commenced operation as a registered school in 2012 and forms part of a national association (EREA) of forty schools which includes, in 2012, thirteen flexible learning centres.

St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre is a co-educational Catholic School in the Edmund Rice tradition. The philosophy of SJFLC draws on the spirit and vision of Edmund Rice Education Australia. It has a clear commitment to social justice and stands in solidarity with disenfranchised young people of all social, cultural and religious backgrounds. The philosophy also has a practical focus, based in the application of four core principles of; Respect (self, others and environment), 'Safe and Legal', 'Participation (have a go)' and 'Honesty' (being fair dinkum) among all participants of the Flexible Learning Centre. This is evident in the ways the organisational culture and practices are shaped through the application of these principles. In essence, the principles establish a 'common ground' among staff, young people and parents, a collective forum, where the means to resolve conflict, negotiate learning, recognise rights, responsibilities and consequences are modelled and explored, both within the group and individually and as members of the broader community.

The 2008 Melbourne Declaration on the Education Goals for Young Australians states that "Australian Governments commit to working with all school sectors to

- Close the gap for young indigenous Australians
- Provide targeted support to disadvantaged students
- Focus on school improvement in low socioeconomic areas"

St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre works with young people who are vulnerable and experience a complexity of inter-related needs. As discussed above, participation and retention are key elements in the philosophy of SJ Flexible Learning Centre, and the development of moral reasoning through the application of the four principles prepares students for responsible citizenship. The learning experiences also build self-confidence and esteem in students; promotes an optimistic view of their potential and future, and assist them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enjoy a healthy and fulfilling life.

St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre offers an inclusive and non-discriminating learning community to young people, who for a variety of reasons, are disenfranchised from mainstream education. Young people are enrolled from both genders, from a variety of language, cultural and religious backgrounds, with particular sensitivity to Indigenous and from backgrounds of socio-economic disadvantage. Young people are exposed to learning experiences that develop understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural values that constitute Australian Society. Learning is focused around the individual needs of students and progress is carefully documented and monitored. Young people, in conjunction with their teachers, youth workers and program coordinator, draft learning plans with articulated education pathways.

Principal's Report

2014 was a year of continued growth and evolving opportunity for the community at St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) in North Melbourne. St Joseph's is a member of the EREA Youth+ national network of Flexible Learning Centres. EREA Youth+ FLC's are committed to supporting young people with educational pathways that foster educational pathways toward positive futures and wellbeing. The school's third year of operation was marked by increasingly rich and diverse connections both within and beyond the school walls. Over the course of the year, more than three hundred young people worked alongside staff and community partners to achieve their personal and academic goals.

Notably, 2014 year saw the establishment of the Maree Johnson program, named in recognition of the late Principal of the boys' college that the site was previously home to. The Maree Johnson program caters to the educational and wellbeing needs of 120 young people who have come to Australia seeking asylum. These young people are invited into community and immersed in the English language through participation in vocational training and an array of school based activities, as well as opportunities to explore Melbourne's café culture and greater Victoria.

Throughout the year, the young people in the Maree Johnson program generously shared their culture with other students at St Joseph's FLC. This was expressed through weekly soccer games, preparing food for several community lunches, and inclusive Eid celebrations. In turn, these young people were enveloped within the established art and music culture at St Joseph's FLC. Young people from the school's mobile program, the Bridge, also experienced an enriching exchange during a trip to central Australia, which included a couple of days spent on country with young people from St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre in Alice Springs.

2014 also saw the expansion of learning choices designed to capture the curiosity and harness the enthusiasm of our young people. For the first time, sewing was offered as an elective and our successful skateboarding elective grew to include 'Skate around the Bay' - an overnight tour of skate parks from Melbourne to Queenscliff, Sorrento to Frankston. Young men from across the site participated in the inaugural coastal program, providing opportunities to explore Victoria's marine landscape through snorkeling, body-surfing and pier-jumping. Moreover, a partnership between St Joseph's FLC, the City of Melbourne, North Melbourne Football Club, Good Cycles and Squeaky Wheels made it possible for a group of our young people to participate in a bike repair and cycling safety program. At the end of the program, each young person rode away with a bike that they had expertly refurbished.

The school year culminated in our first awards night attended by young people, their parents, carers and friends. This provided an opportunity to recognise those young people who had successfully completed components of their Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning or vocational certificate, as well as other valued contributions to the life of the St Joseph's FLC community. On Christmas Day, many young people and staff again chose to come together and share food in celebration.

For young people that have previously struggled to find their place in the education system, the year at St Joseph's FLC afforded ever more opportunities to belong to and shape an emerging learning community.

Dale Murray
Principal & Director
Youth+

Best Practice Guidelines

St Joseph's identifies a number of best practice guidelines supportive of meaningful socially inclusive educational experiences. While not exhaustive, the following provide a basis for programming and young person support.

Individualised Education Program

Education programs need to be attuned to the individual young person by an assessment of need and delivery within a supportive environment that will re-engage the young person with learning and encourage a sense of community. Personal Learning Plans are developed and negotiated with young people and form an integral part of daily learning programs.

Negotiated and Articulated Goals

Education programs will negotiate goals and the methods of achieving those goals. Such goals will be tailored to the identified needs of the individual.

Professional and Community Driven

Education programs should be characterised by a high degree of professionalism, and supported by a close relationship with communities in which they are located.

Young Person Support

Young People are encouraged to make a commitment to the program and its principles. Young Person achievement is valued and celebrated with appropriate recognition given to the uniqueness of adolescent development.

Family/Carer Involvement

Families are viewed as partners in their children's educational experience. While family circumstances may be related to student alienation, the importance of building positive family relationships is a priority.

Learning Choices

Diagnostic assessment is important to provide guidance in planning individualised programs. Effective programs will engage young people in learning toward defined literacy and numeracy outcomes and other areas of knowledge relevant to real life situations. Young people experiencing risk will be provided with programs that cater for their spiritual, physical, social, psychological and intellectual development. As well, they will be provided with learning choices both in and beyond the school and with programs that are effectively linked to community agencies and vocational pathways.

Multi-Professional and Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Team members use a multidisciplinary, multi-professional approach to provide health, educational, cultural, social and emotional support for young people. Multi professionals are encouraged to develop supportive relationships with young people, and assist them with their basic life needs. Multi-professionals are encouraged to develop links with external support agencies (e.g. Child and Youth Mental Health Services, Drug & Alcohol services, accommodation services, counselling services).

Staff selection processes should identify staff members who are flexible, are able to relate to young people, are willing to negotiate, be clear about operation by principles, as well as being clear about the responsibilities and the rights of all.

School Partnerships / Value Added Programs

The Wellbeing Coordinator, Youth Workers and Teachers provide support to young people often linking young people to outside agencies for appropriate and professional support. A key initiative of 2014 was to invite agencies to partner with us in the development and delivery of wellbeing and learning choices programs at St Joseph's thus making their services more accessible to our young people. A number of these are outlined as follows:

THE SNORKEL AND COASTAL PROGRAM

This program, run in partnership with Sea All Dolphin Swims, aimed to engage young people through a variety of experiential learning opportunities based around Port Phillip Bay. The program was intentional in building the skills and capacity of young people to safely participate in an open water environment. Swim skills were covered in local indoor pools prior to introducing young people to open ocean environments.

The program engaged young people across the whole school community and culminated in an overnight camp in which young people were able to swim and snorkel with dolphins and seals near Queenscliff. The program afforded young people from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds to build positive relationships and share in **each other's'** life experiences.

MAREE JOHNSON PROGRAM

In the second half of 2014 St Joseph's school welcomed a new program into its community. The program saw around 120 Asylum seeker students begin to undertake a VCAL program. All the students needed a lot of support with developing their English skills but also wanted a holistic approach to their studies. In line with the VCAL structures the students have participated in many experiences beyond the classroom. One particularly exciting example of this experiential learning was the journey the Young People took to Sovereign Hill. Every week the students in the Maree program go on 'Out and Abouts' in Melbourne to increase their knowledge of their new city. The program has been a wonderful addition to St Joseph's and the Young people have really taken to the schools principles and their English skills have improved enormously.

CAMPING IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Young people from the school's mobile program, the Bridge, experienced an enriching exchange during a trip to central Australia, which included two days spent on country with young people from St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre in Alice Springs. The young people had the opportunity to participate in Indigenous art activities, a trip to Uluru, a young men's program, and a game of local football. The trip gave the young people the opportunity to engage with their interstate peers, deepen their understanding of Indigenous culture and Australian communities, and practice their camping skills!

School Partnerships / Value Added Programs (con't)

VICTORIA POLICE, (PSOS), METROPOLITAN TRAIN SERVICE & COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

With a focus on developing positive and productive relationships with our local community, the SJFLC Young People actively participated in a number of youth forums that truly enabled their voices to be heard. Through actively living the principles, our young people respectfully participated in a range of forums facilitated in conjunction with the Victoria Police, Protective Services Officers (PSOs), Metropolitan Train Service and community organisations. These forums included the inaugural Forum that focussed on building stronger relationships between the SJFLC young people and the public transport system. This and subsequent forums were complimented through the tireless work, support and program specific sessions offered to the SJFLC Young people by Diane Bloom, Leading Senior Constable & Youth Resource Officer from Melbourne East and Aaron Heriot, Victoria Police Youth Resource Officer. Through trust and mutual respect consistently shown by our Young People, Diane and Aaron were able to tap into some of the relationship challenges and the opportunities that can be developed over time. The success of such positive opportunities for SJFLC is testament to the ever increasing connection and contribution that our Young People are making to our community.

CANDLEBARK PARTNERSHIP

The partnership between St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre and the Candlebark School in Romsey, was established in Term 4, 2014. The program sees an entire class from the Whelan program travelling to Candlebark School and engaging in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. The program affords our young people the opportunity to build relationships with a group of Year 9 students through animal care skills, group games and activities, planned community meals and a pen pal program.

The partnership has seen young people from both schools build an understanding of the learning needs, social experiences and cultural richness possessed by their peers. The program will continue in the coming year to further strengthen the relationships between the young people and the schools.

GOOD WHEEL PROJECT 2015

During Semester 1, 2015 St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre in conjunction with Good Cycles, Squeaky Wheels, North Melbourne Football Club and the City of Melbourne conducted the "Good Wheel Project".

Bike workshop activities we're supervised by St. Joseph's staff (2) and bike mechanics/ trainers from Good Cycles and Squeaky Wheels. The bike workshops ran over a 6 week period starting with an information meet and greet. Session 1 will commenced Tuesday 14th April through to Session 5 finishing on Tuesday 12th May 2015. Please find listed below a brief overview of the Good Wheel Project:

- Hands on repairing/ maintaining and building of bikes
- Linking practical and theoretical outcomes into VCAL (N/A)
- Learning basic road rules and riding skills
- Group bike riding around the City of Melbourne

At the completion of the Good Wheel Project (6 week commitment) students received a certificate and will got to keep the bike they had built/overhauled along with brand new riding helmet, lock, and riding lights.



Student Learning

Each young person at St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre has two workers that are attached to them and have the role of 'checking in on them'. This team generally includes a teacher and a youth worker. The role of these people is to establish a close relationship to the young person, to monitor their progress, to advocate on their behalf, to provide advice, direction and support during difficult personal issues, and overall to support the young person to achieve their stated personal and educational goals. The role of this team is broad in scope, in-depth in its substance, and long-term in relationship. It includes:

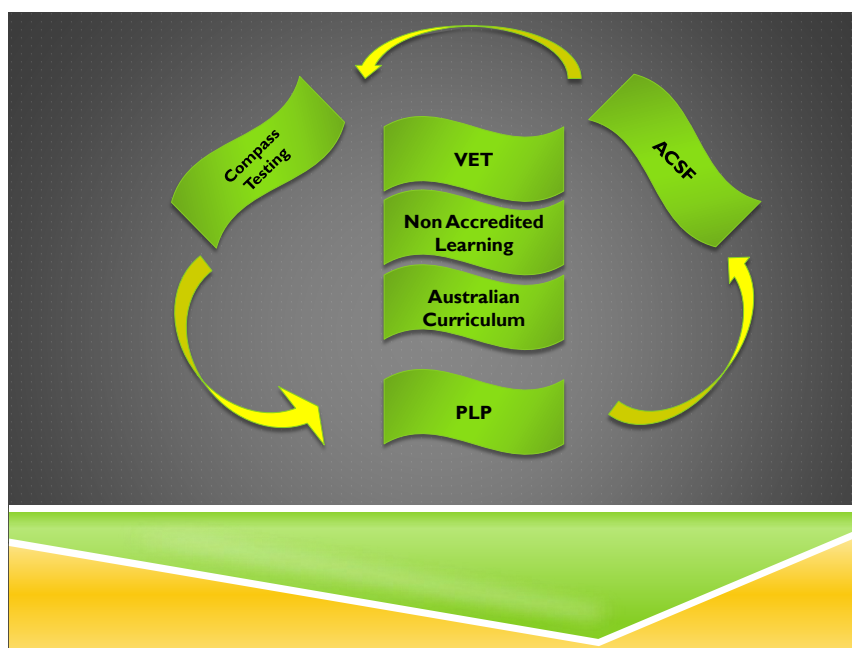
- In-house mentoring and advocacy
- Supporting the young person and their families in times of emotional crisis or practical need
- Maintaining the close partnership between school, student and parent/carer
- Working in partnership with other agencies who are involved with students e.g. DHS, Youth Justice, Health services, Community Agencies etc
- Supporting and mentoring young people who live independently
- Helping students to build capacity and resilience in social and emotional aspects of their lives
- Informally helping young people develop positive self-concept
- Supporting young people with issues of drug misuse and self harm.

Curriculum

Relevant and Responsive Learning Choices

Learning begins with awareness of people's circumstances and an ability to create a learning framework which is relevant and responsive. As well, a responsive learning framework will incorporate the necessary challenge for transformation and development of the person. Learning Choices within a Flexible Learning Centre are constructed. It emerges from openness, negotiation, experimentation and the interaction of mindsets which seek the common good of the young person within a context of individual skills and potential. Learning Choices are designed and implemented not to disadvantage young people but to build upon and pay respect to the capitals young people bring to the learning community. The Learning Choice framework must also be congruent with professional practice and community expectations. Learning Choices encompass literacy and numeracy skills, rich humanity key learning areas, vocational and employment focused outcomes, sport and recreation activities, relationship development and community participation. Therefore an appropriate skill base to enable the individual to take part meaningfully with social and employment situations will be fostered. This model correlates with the Australian Core Skills Framework where content covers key learning areas and is credentialed against National VET standards. The following diagram illustrates the model used in the planning and delivery of learning.

There is an interconnection between Compass testing literacy/numeracy screening; Personal Learning Plans (PLP); The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) and curriculum delivery – accredited (VET) and non-accredited learning and the Australian Curriculum. Young people receive two Outcomes based reports utilising the Australian Core Skills Framework at the completion of Terms 2 and 4. All workers keep in regular contact with families and caregivers about how they are doing in terms of their wellbeing and their learning choices programs.



Naplan Data- families chose to withdraw from Naplan so we have no data from this or comparative data from previous years

Enrolments by year level (based upon August census data 2014)

Gender/Year	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Male	3	19	15	93	37	40	207
Female	1	13	17	21	18	10	85
Total	4	32	32	114	55	50	292
Indigenous	1	3	3	1	1	2	11
SWD	1	1		2	2		6

Census: 292

Full time equivalent enrolments: 292

Language Background other than English: 116

Indigenous Students: 11

Students with Disability: 6

Student Attendance Rate (Attendance = attendance on school site/program): 75%

Non-attendance: Short periods of non-attendance are followed up by the classroom teacher and youth worker. This will involve phone calls or dropping by the young person's house during the bus run. Longer periods are followed up the youth workers, Wellbeing Coordinator and/or Teacher-in-charge and will usually involve a home visit.

Post School Destinations

TERTIARY STUDY	0%
TAFE / VET	1.7%
APPRENTICESHIP / TRAINEESHIP	.35%
DEFERRED	%
EMPLOYMENT	2%

Staff / Professional Learning

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	
DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2014	
Victorian Institute of Teaching – Mentor Training Program	
Independent Education Union Victoria Tasmania – Training and Support in Establishing Union Representatives in the St Joseph's community	
Mandatory Child Protection On-line Training	
TAE Training	
First Aid Training	
Foundation Skills	
Qld Conference & New Staff Days	
TOP Days	
NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL	48
AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL	\$1666

Teacher Standards and Qualifications

Qualification	Staff
MA	3
Post Graduate Diploma	13
Bachelor Degree	5
Other	

Title	Number of Staff	FTE
Head of Campus	1	1
Teachers	20	20
Youth Workers/Social Worker	21	21
Other support	3	3
Canteen Workers	2	2
Administrations Officers	3	3

School Community Life

<p>Strengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast and lunch program – staff and young people share meals together – good community building time. • Circle Time – all staff and young people meet to start the day and be present to each other. Young people are starting to speak out more in the meetings with the aim being that young people will run the meetings. • Range of engaging activities offered including surfing, sewing, trampolining, dance, snorkelling, skateboarding, art and wellbeing activities. • Strong relationships with core group of young people • Operation by principles – no school rules – young people and staff all operate within a common ground framework which breaks down traditional power – authority paradigms. This approach gives young people a voice and a responsibility for their actions and this culture is starting to build. • New learning spaces supporting the needs of new students allow opportunity for new relationships to form. • Working closely with other agencies – Catholic Education Office Melbourne, MacKillop Family Services, DHS, Dousta Galla Community Health, Inner Melbourne Vet Cluster (IMVC) • Developing personal learning plans with young people which focus on high interest areas • Building relationships with young people and families fundamental to the success of the school • Regular follow up with families/ guardians • Daily follow up of non-attendance • Celebration of achievements e.g. attendance, participation, learning outcomes • Continued delivery of our Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning Program & VET • Friday basketball game involving staff and students
<p>New initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive expansion of our program to enable us to work effectively with a larger group of disenfranchised young people • Expansion of outreach based support and after hours class • Cross Program activities • Maree Johnson Program • Indigenous Cultural Liaison Officer & Multi-cultural Education Aids

Stake Holder Engagement

The Head of Campus, teachers and youth workers have indicated the following indicators of stakeholder satisfaction.

Increased engagement demonstrated by young people who are:

- participating in morning meetings,
- young people negotiating their behavior and attendance using the language of the four principles: Respect, Safe and Legal, Honesty and Participation
- young people making contact with workers to let them know where to pick them up or if they are not attending
- young people identifying as a member of the SJFLC Community
- young people making more positive choices as they do not want to leave school early
- young people engaging in sporting and other elective activities
- young people engaging in both formal and informal learning opportunities
- young people being supportive and welcoming when a new young person starts
- young people starting to mentor and support one another

Parents have made comments such as “..having the motivation that he gets to come back to SJFLC has helped my son get through his time in Juvenile detention. He has never had any connection to a program like this before”.

Program managers, case workers and Judges have all noted the incredible opportunity that they, and the young people, feel that SJFLC is for them. Workers are constantly surprised when their clients present at school and complete their own referral form to enrol in SJFLC.

Strategies used to involve Parents/ Carers in the education of their young person

St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre recognizes that parents/carers/family/community members are the primary educators of their young people. Some young people live independently. The work of the school is most successful when it collaborates effectively with parents / carers. The Flexible Learning Centre supports and encourages this role through:

- ☑ Newsletters, emails, phone calls, text messages and home visits
- ☑ Parents and carer meetings,
- ☑ Social celebrations, and
- ☑ The voluntary contribution of distinctive skills and enthusiasm of parents and community members. These are gratefully acknowledged and celebrated.

Financial Performance

REPORTING FRAMEWORK	MODIFIED CASH \$
Recurrent income	Tuition
School fees	
Other fee income	
Private income	526,333
State government recurrent grants	876,193
Australian government recurrent grants	4,912,497
Total recurrent income	6,315,023
Recurrent Expenditure	Tuition
Salaries; allowances and related expenses	3,424,276
Non salary expenses	1,781,320
Total recurrent expenditure	5,205,596
Capital income and expenditure	Tuition
Government capital grants	
Capital fees and levies	
Other capital income	
Total capital income	
Total capital expenditure	419,690
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)	
Total opening balance	
Total closing balance	

Note that the information provided above does not include the following items:

System levies charged to individual schools, intra-systemic transfers and diocesan supplementary capital fund (SCF) supported borrowings for primary schools. The information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. This VRQA template is not comparable to the ACARA school-level income reporting requirements which are to be reported on the MySchool website. ACARA school level reporting requirements will require system level income from Government grants and some private income to be allocated by school. This will be a small adjustment in relation to the total level of school resources. At this stage, recurrent income from Government sources, school generated income and capital expenditure are to be reported by schools. Additionally when assessing the private income of the school include both recurrent and capital school fees.

Future Directions

In 2015 St Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre will further expand upon the learning opportunities available to young people who have had difficulty engaging in mainstream education. Notably, St Joseph's FLC is adding a fourth program to cater to the needs of young people who find it difficult to attend school due to social anxiety, parenting commitments or extended periods of educational disengagement. The program is named after the Youth+ National Infrastructure Manager, Br. Bob Wallace, who works tirelessly to create inclusive and engaging learning environments for young people across Australia. The program will bring together our existing mobile and after-hours classes, as well as a new outreach education model and a self-contained classroom setting for young people who experience anxiety at school. The Br. Bob Wallace program aims to work with young people to gradually increase their attendance and engagement in their preferred classroom or vocational setting.

2015 will also see a number of exciting developments across the school's established programs. In partnership with Candlebark, young people from St Joseph's Whelan Program (middle school) will have the opportunity to spend a day each week learning alongside their peers in the natural surrounds of the Macedon Ranges. Young people from the Maree Johnson program will travel to Canberra to learn more about our nation's capital, and in term two we will introduce a cross program Indigenous elective. The elective will give students across the school the opportunity to learn about contemporary indigenous issues and share in the spirit of reconciliation.