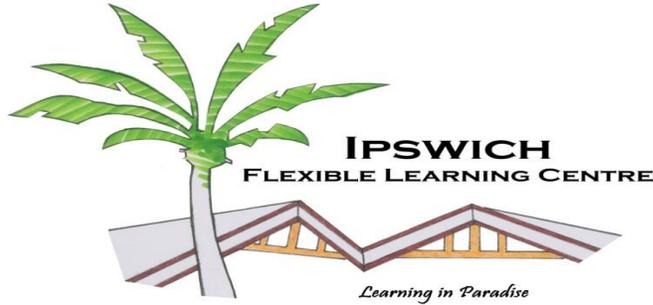


Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre
1 Queen Victoria Parade
Ipswich, QLD 4305.

Ph: 07 3281 2565



IPSWICH FLEXIBLE LEARNING CENTRE

1 Queen Victoria Parade, IPSWICH Q4305.

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

This annual report for 2014 is published to provide information about the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre for parents/carers, young people and other interested parties. This report contains the detail mandated by the Commonwealth and State Governments and Edmund Rice Education Australia reporting requirements.

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INTRODUCTION

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre commenced operation in 2012 and in 2014 is part of a national association of nearly fifty schools which includes sixteen flexible learning centres and attached Flexible Learning Arrangements (Mobiles).

The distinctive education provided to all students is described in, *The Charter: A Proclamation of an authentic Expression of Edmund Rice Education as Applied to Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition*. This can be viewed on line at <http://www.erea.edu.au/our-identity/index.cfm?loadref=175>

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is a co-educational Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition. It is one of, by the end of 2014, five Flexible Learning Centres operated by the Xavier Flexi Schools Network under the Governance of Edmund Rice Education Australia - Youth+.

The philosophy of the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre draws on the spirit and vision of Edmund Rice Education (the Christian Brothers). It has a clear commitment to social justice and stands in solidarity with disadvantaged 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*” (for self, others and environment), “*Safe and Legal*” environment, “*Participation*” (have a go) and “*Honesty*” (being fair dinkum) among all participants of the Ipswich 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 aim of the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is to respond to the complex needs of disadvantaged young people who have been marginalised from mainstream education. The school achieves its aim by building honest and authentic relationships with young people and their families, supporting and celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each individual young person.

Future outlook

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”

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre works with young people who are vulnerable and experience a complexity of inter-related needs. Participation and retention are key elements in the philosophy of Ipswich 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, promote an optimistic view of their potentialities and future, and assist them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enjoy a healthy and fulfilling life.

Learning experiences address curriculum areas of literacy, numeracy, study of society and environment, vocational training, information technology, music and technology, outdoor education, Indigenous education, relational and spiritual education and science.

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre offers an inclusive and non-discriminating learning community to young people, who for a variety of reasons, are marginalized from mainstream education. Young people are enrolled from both genders, from a variety of language, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, with particular sensitivity to Indigenous culture, 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 education support workers, discuss career aspirations and draft learning plans with articulated pathways to further education and/or vocational education and training.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre 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 are 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, and support the development of the whole person and the affirmation of their dignity. This is determined and captured with the young person's Personal Learning Plan (PLP).

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 by workers and young people.

Family/Carer Involvement

Parent/s, carer/s, stakeholders and the immediate community for the young people are viewed as partners in the young person's educational experience. While some of these partners' circumstances may be related to young people's alienation, the importance of building positive relationships is a priority.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAM

Each young person at Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre has a Pastoral Care team. At the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre this team comprises their classroom teacher for core literacy/numeracy and at least one other significant worker. The role of the team 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.
- CYMHS, Dept of Communities, Youth Justice 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
- Networking with other agencies such as Youth and Family Services to provide specialist assistance e.g. family mediation, counselling, anger management
- The Pastoral Care program also includes the support work of the School Welfare Officer / Chaplain, the Family Worker, the Youth Support Coordinator, the Cultural Liaison Officer and access to the Network Child Protection Officer as required.

The total 2014 enrolment of the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre in full time equivalent students is shown below.

| Year Level | Male | female | Total Students |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| 8 | 6 | 5 | 11 |
| 9 | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| 10 | 6 | 14 | 20 |
| 11 | 24 | 15 | 39 |
| 12 | 12 | 9 | 21 |
| Total | 50 | 48 | 98 |

LEARNING CHOICES

The Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre provides holistic learning experiences that address the social needs of students, and promotes their emotional, cognitive, spiritual and academic development. The purpose of the learning experiences is to empower young people to take personal responsibility for their actions and learning, achieve greater autonomy and self-reliance and to engage in the transition to further education and/or employment.

Learning experiences address curriculum areas of literacy, numeracy, study of society and environment, vocational training, information technology, music and technology, outdoor education, Indigenous education, relational and spiritual education and science.

Subjects offered at various year levels in 2014 included:

| | CORE | ELECTIVE |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Year 8/9/10 | Integrated Studies which include literacy, numeracy, SOSE, Science, basic computer skills, and general life skills | Art, Board Games Creation, Building and Construction, Metalwork, Cooking, Cooking and Health Nutrition, Craft, Drama, Gardening, Hobbies, Jewellery Making, Music, Physical Education, Screen-printing, Skateboard Making, Sport and Recreation, Bicycle Maintenance, |

| | Authority Subjects | Authority Registered Subjects | Certificate Courses |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| Years 11/ 12 | Nil | English Communication (6125) Prevocational Maths (6140) Recreation (6206) Religion & Ethics (6245) Social & Community Studies (6241) | Cert I (30999QLD) & II (10306NAT) Functional Literacy. Cert II (CU320109) Music Comp. Cert I (CUV10111) Visual Arts. Cert I (ICA10111) Information, Digital Media & Technology. |

All students were designated to their integrated studies classes as per the results of their Compass test results regardless of their year levels. (All young people are compass tested at enrolment).

All electives were offered to all young people irrespective of age or ability. Young people were offered various outings and excursions to enhance classroom skills, team building and social and communication skills.

The electives were chosen to enhance:

- Communication and participation skills and to support young people with social and emotional issues and to provide lifelong strategies to utilise in their future career paths.
- The young people's life experiences by offering opportunities where due to the individual's personal situation may not be normally available to them.

By offering these types of unique experiences, the young people develop a "fun in learning" attitude and thus changing attitudes to formal education.

An off shoot to the "fun in learning" attitude the young people develop is that they will want to attend the Centre and thus increase attendance and retention rates.

Learning Support was given to young people completing Certificate courses through TAFE and employment agencies.

Extra Learning Support was and is continually being provided to Young People with verified disabilities.

OUTCOMES

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is unable to calculate the apparent retention rate Year 8 – 12 across 2010 – 2014 as this centre opened in 2012.

APPARENT STUDENT RETENTION RATE

| Senior cohort Year | Year 8 Base | Year 12 at exit | Retention Rate % |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2013 | 5 | 16 | 320% |
| 2014 | 11 | 21 | 190% |

ATTENDANCE RATE

The average student attendance rate for 2014 was 84%. This number excludes students who terminated enrolment during the year or who were absent for extended explained absences.

| Outcomes for Year 12 Students | |
|---|------|
| Total number of students who completed Year 12 | None |
| Total number of Senior Certificates awarded | N/A |
| Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates and awarded a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification | N/A |
| Percentage of Queensland tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving an offer. | N/A |

SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT PRODUCE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

The Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre has formed a strong relationship with Apprenticeships Queensland, Ipswich and several young people have obtained work experience, School Based Traineeships or School Based Apprenticeships. This relationship has helped to develop very positive personal development as well as employment skills for the young people involved.

The Centre maintains a weekly connection with the Ipswich Community Youth Centre. The young people access breakfast at the centre whilst developing strong ties to the local community.

The Centre offers regular Outdoor Adventure Based Education opportunities – Rock climbing, Abseiling, bush walking, canoeing, mountain biking, archery and overnight camping experiences. The young people take an active role in the planning and evaluation of these activities.

Young people who are Mums or Dads are supported by the parenting program. This program covers areas such as life skills, building confidence and self-esteem as well as the Certificate courses offered by the School.

As discussed previously a wide variety of electives were offered over the year – electives that allowed young people to explore, acknowledge, and excite their own individuality. These electives allowed the refinement of fine motor skills to sporting ability and agility. Basic skills and refinement were honed in areas of cooking and gardening. Creative outlets and basic skills were offered through art, drama, music, construction, and the crafts. There were many opportunities to try, explore, and refine, new avenues of learning supporting the growth of self-worth and a sense of satisfaction in completing work. Team building, peer support, scaffolding, and life skills were integral in the delivery of these electives.

Reporting is based on the Australian Core Skills Framework where reporting is provided on the five core areas of Learning, English Language, Literacy and Numeracy. Each young person was reported on their own individual achievements and bench marks and not on a class average or placing in class. Any areas of concern were seen as goals for the next term's focus via an Individual Learning Plan. These Learning Plans were

reviewed quarterly and reports were prepared half-yearly. Anytime throughout the academic year parents/carers were more than welcome and encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding their young person’s educational plan.

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre, flexible by name and nature, provides programs as the needs arise. Networking with outside agencies and tutors similar programmes and activities were investigated and offered to our parents and parents-to-be. Special support programmes at the centre were initiated to support these young people.

Other special support programmes offered included grief programmes for victims of crime and/or accidents; job readiness programmes including mock interviews.

As our network grew and continues to grow we were able and will be able to offer programmes and opportunities to meet the present and future needs of our young people.

YEAR 12 COHORT POST SCHOOL DESTINATION

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2014 Year 12 post-school destinations survey, Next Step – Student Destination Report for the school were not available. Information about the post school destinations of our students will be posted to our website after 30 September, 2015. The following interim data reports the destinations of students as accurately as the school is able to ascertain at this point.

| School Year – 2014 | Number of Students in each category | Percentage of Students in each category |
|---|--|--|
| Bridging Course for University (degree) | 1 | 5% |
| VET total (Cert IV+ III, I-II, apprenticeship, traineeship) | 3 | 15% |
| Ongoing learning at Centre | 5 | 25% |
| Working full-time | 3 | 15% |
| Working part-time/casual | 3 | 15% |
| Seeking work | 4 | 20% |
| Not studying or in the labour force | 1 | 5% |

CO CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Centre provides extensive opportunities for young people to participate in co curricular or non class room activities at their level and within their areas of interest. Participation is encouraged. The broad range of opportunities or choices for young people includes activities that are described as cultural, sporting, intellectual, service or Outdoor Adventure Based related.

| Cultural | Sporting | Academic | Service | Outdoor Adventure Based Learning |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Aboriginal and Torres Islander events and activities | Football (various codes) | Career workshops | Child Protection Week | Adventure based camps |
| Multicultural events & activities | Basketball | Library Visits | Mercy Centre | Camping |
| Aboriginal Film nights | Swimming | Museum | Various Agency Visits | Cycling |
| | Rock-climbing | Art Gallery | "LoveBits" | Bush walking |
| | Abseiling | Theatre | Anti-bullying Workshops | |
| | Athletics | | Cyber Safety | |
| | Orienteering | | Community Bar-be-Ques | |
| | PCYC activities | | Street links | |
| | Fitness | | Sexual Health and wellbeing | |

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 2014

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre Flexible Learning Centre is committed to the ongoing professional development and formation of staff. This continues to enrich the educational opportunities provided for our young people and models to our young people the modern reality of life long learning. The following priorities were identified in the Centre's 2014 Operational Plan.

All staff have participated in annual Whole Staff Gathering Days and completed professional Development in Spirituality, Ethos, Values and Identity and Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition. (These Whole Staff Gathering days contribute to the Accreditation to teach in a Catholic school). Staff participated in Child Protection Conferences and Workshops on a rotational and ongoing basis. Staff also participated in ongoing in-house workshops in dealing with young people with varying disabilities and issues.

It was identified that teaching staff needed to upgrade their professional skills to verify Certificate courses. Some staff members enrolled in TAE courses for 2013 and it is envisaged that all teaching staff will have completed these upgrades by the end of 2014.

The average amount spent per staff member in 2014 on professional learning was \$3250.

THE SOCIAL CLIMATE OF THE CENTRE

One hallmark of the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is the very real climate of compassionate care evident. This is expressed through:

- Community Care Groups
- Availability and willingness of staff to talk with young people
- Consultations with the Social Worker/Welfare Officer – which may require referral to counsellors and outside agencies
- Programs for the;
 - Integration of young people to the centre.
 - Transition of young people to work experience, traineeships, job interviews
- Whole school workshops including, Child Protection, Anti bullying, social awareness.
- Participation in Community Activities to raise social awareness e.g., *Street Links* - an initiative of Ipswich City Council, where the young people helped in activities. *Street Links* provided an opportunity for the marginalised of Ipswich City to meet welfare agencies in a non-threatening arena
- Participation in a Child protection workshops with our neighbouring school to celebrate Child Protection Week
- Weekly community BBQ's involving young people and outside agencies where young people could communicate with agency representatives in a casual atmosphere.

STRATEGIES USED FOR INVOLVING PARENTS / CARERS IN THE EDUCATION OF THEIR YOUNG PERSON.

Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre recognizes that parents/carers 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 of parents / carers through:

- Information evenings,
- Newsletters
- Information letters
- Cultural celebrations
- 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.

STAFF

The staff of Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is a highly qualified, experienced and generous group of professionals who consistently contributes more than would otherwise be expected both within the classroom and beyond. The distinctive skills / qualifications and experience of our staff include:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Total number of teachers | 7 |
| Total number of Support staff | 6 |
| Total Number of Staff | 13 |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| David Harrison (HOC) | Dip Ed (Manual Arts); Grad Dip Arts (Religious Ed.); BA. Ed.; Dip Community Welfare (Youth); Justice of Peace |
| Tim Acutt | BA Arts; Dip Teaching; Dip Art, TAE |
| Ken Millar | BA Ed; Dip Ed (Physical Ed), TAE |
| Tash Vazey | BA (PolSc); Grad Dip Ed |
| Barb Hogan | BA Arts; Grad Dip Ed(Sec); Grad Dip Ed(SEC); MA Ed(Drama); MA Counselling |
| Terry Flynn | BAdult VocEd, Maintain Fitter & Turner, TAE |
| Sarah Craig | BCreInd/BED(Sec) |
| Jacqueline Stevens | BA Ed(Sec) |

The average attendance rate for teachers in the 2014 academic year was 96%. This figure reflects a low rate of sick leave among the staff. This figure does not include staff absent from classes attending professional development activities or who would have been replaced whilst on other forms of leave such as long service or maternity leave. The effect of an absent staff member, for an extended period due to illness last year has been eliminated from this calculation as she was replaced by a contract teacher.

The teaching staff retention rate expressed as a percentage is 100%. This indicates the percentage of teachers who have continued service at the school from 2013 into 2014.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

In recent times, substantial change has occurred in the provision of computer hardware and software for young people and staff. Professional development continues to enhance the skills of staff in this important facet of learning. Information management has become a critical literacy. Integration of technology within all learning continues to evolve across the variety the school's subject offerings.

A class room designated for computer use was equipped with fifteen new computers allowing the existing computers and laptops to be used in other classroom areas.

2014 MILESTONES

2014 was a year of establishment and cohesion. The refurbishments to the site had been completed during the 2013 – 2014 school holidays. The final handover was completed

in the first half of the year. Staff members were instrumental in setting up classrooms during the holiday period to have the school operational for the start of the new academic year.

The Music Room was equipped and the Music programme emerged and grew. The Parents Programme was established in the newly furnished Parents' room and networks were formed within this area. A Bicycle Repair and maintenance programme and the refurbishment of a suitable area were commenced. The previous Manual Arts Room started to be refurbished and fitted out with equipment. The newly refurbished computer lab was equipped with donated computers and later in the year these computers were replaced with newer models; the donated computers being relocated in other teaching spaces.

Sun shades were purchased (with the help of a grant) and fitted. The students with the guidance of staff built seven (7) picnic tables to place under sun sails therefore having a communal area for meals and gatherings.

GOALS FOR THE 2015 YEAR

In 2015 emphasis will be given to:

- Provide a facility to inspire our young people to enjoy their educational journey and thus prepare them for life outside of the centre
- Inspire and instil a joy of learning in our young people
- Consolidate and build on the values of the community that is the Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre
- Promote the values of *Respect, Honesty, Participation, and Safe and Legal* as values for everyday life
- Give young people pride and self-confidence within themselves so as to build self-worth and self-respect.
- Provide young people with the skills to equip themselves for everyday highs and lows.
- Continue to update and provide modern technology for the young people
- Give opportunities to young people to engage in work experience in trades and career pathways
- Update and build up our bank of learning and teaching resources
- Continual upgrading of staff qualifications
- Maintain the high levels of Child Protection competency of all staff.
- Grow and strengthen our network connections within the wider community.
- To build greater connections with the Aboriginal community and other cultural groups
- Enable and empower our transitioned young people to be an integral participant in the broader community
- Continue and regenerate the Parents' programme at the Centre in the newly installed Parents' Room

- Continue the Music programme in the newly installed Music studio
- Provide water cooler for all.
- Complete the refurbishment and the equipping of the Manuel Arts Room.
- Complete the refurbishment and the equipping of the Bicycle Repair and Maintenance Room.
- The building and equipping of a Welding facility where the first project can be built. It is envisaged that the students under the supervision of qualified staff will build an aluminium boat.
- Ongoing landscaping of the grounds where outdoor classes can be held, timeout and rest areas can be established. Vegetable and herb gardens along with flower gardens to be built.
- Built a half court in the school grounds
- The provision of secure storage spaces

CONCLUSION

In conclusion Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre is still in a growth period. New life has been given to our centre – it has been refurbished and renewed. We are establishing an educational “Paradise” for the marginalised and disenchanting – an Oasis that is the very essence and cornerstone of Edmund Rice Education. We will continue to grow and expand in the ensuing years.

Trevor David Harrison
Head of Campus
Ipswich Flexible Learning Centre

Tim Young
Principal
Xavier Flexi Schools Network