



**St Joseph's Catholic
Flexible Learning Centre
Alice Springs**

Annual School Report 2015



St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre
Secondary School (7 - 12)
3 Wills Terrace, Alice Springs 0870

Annual Report 2015

This annual report for 2015 is published to provide information about the **St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre** for parents/carers, young people and other interested parties. This report contains the detail mandated by the Commonwealth and Territory Governments and Edmund Rice Education Australia reporting requirements.

I see no value in a centre of learning, which churns out numberless school leavers each year and is passively part of a society torn apart by divisions of race and partisan politics... Our schools exist to challenge popular beliefs and dominant cultural values, to ask the difficult question, to look at life from the standpoint of the minority, the victim, the outcast, and the stranger.*

*Former Congregational Leader of the Christian Brothers, Br Phillip Pinto. New York 2002

Introduction

St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) is a part of Edmund Rice Education Australia Youth+ and is conducted in accordance with the Youth+ philosophy and principles. St Joseph's Catholic FLC commenced operation as a registered Non-State School in 2012, and is part of a national association of over 50 mainstream schools and Flexible Learning Centres.

St Joseph's Catholic FLC is a co-educational Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition and one of seventeen Catholic schools in the Diocese of Darwin. St Joseph's also has, due to the special nature of our work, a Service Agreement with the Northern Territory Government. The special nature of our work in Alice Springs is the engagement with young people who for many reasons have been unable to be in a mainstream school environment. The philosophy of the St Joseph's Catholic FLC draws on the spirit and vision of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA). Our learning community 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, Safe and Legal, Participation* and *Honesty* among all participants of the St Joseph's Catholic FLC. 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/carers. This collective forum offers the means to resolve conflict, negotiate learning, recognise rights, responsibilities and consequences as they are modelled and explored. This occurs both within the group, as individuals and as members of the broader community.

St Joseph's Catholic FLC 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 St Joseph's Catholic FLC. 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 young people, 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.

St Joseph's Catholic FLC offers an inclusive and non-discriminating learning community to young people, who for a variety of reasons, are disenfranchised from mainstream education. Our schools intentionally support the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on the Education Goals for Young Australians: "Australian Governments commit to working with all school sectors to:

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

Young people are enrolled from a variety of language, cultural and religious backgrounds, with particular sensitivity to Indigenous culture.

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 young people and progress is carefully documented and monitored. In conjunction with their teachers, youth workers and wellbeing staff, young people draft learning plans with articulated education pathways.

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.

Best Practice Guidelines

St Joseph's Catholic FLC 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/carers 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/carers 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 identify staff members who are: flexible, able to relate to young people, willing to negotiate, clear about operation by principles, as well as being clear about the responsibilities and the rights of all.

School Profile as at August Census 2015

The total 2015 enrolment of the St Joseph's Catholic FLC full time equivalent students is shown below.

Gender/Year	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Male	5	6	10	9	10	11	51
Female	5	3	6	11	15	4	44
Total	10	9	16	20	25	15	95



Young Person Support

Each young person at St Joseph's Catholic FLC has staff who support them in their health and wellbeing. At St Joseph's these staff include their classroom teacher for core literacy/numeracy and at least one other.

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 staff 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, young person and parent/carer.
- Working in partnership with other agencies who are involved with students e.g. CYMHS (Child Youth Mental Health Service), Department of Communities and Families, Youth Justice, Healing Centre, Men's and Women's Health Centre, Gap Youth Centre).
- 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 the designated class Youth Worker, class Teacher, Wellbeing Coordintaor and School Chaplain.

In 2015 the total number of young people who were enrolled at the St Joseph's Catholic Flexible Learning Centre in full time equivalent students is shown below. These figures highlight the transient nature of the student population the St Joseph's Catholic FLC serve.

Year Level	Student Enrolment during 2015
7	17
8	29
9	42
10	33
11	31
12	19
Total	171

% Attendance	No. YP Semester 1	No. YP Semester 2
75 - 100 %	19	19
50 - 75%	37	29
25 - 50%	40	45
Less than 25%	19	40
Total	115	133
Not enrolled but still connection	4	8



Curriculum - Learning Choices Program

The St Joseph's Catholic FLC provides holistic learning experiences that address the social needs of students, and promotes their emotional, physical, 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 include:

YEAR LEVEL	CORE	ELECTIVE
Year 7- 8	Literacy Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport • Art • Music • Yungbul Mob • Young Women's Group • Design and Technology
Years 9 - 10	Literacy Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport • Art • Music • Yungbul Mob • Young Women's Group • Design and Technology

YEAR LEVEL	Authority Registered Subjects	Certificate Courses
Years 11 - 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy for Work and Community Life • Numeracy for Work and Community Life • Personal Learning Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate 1 Visual Art

Outcomes

As in 2014 St Joseph's encouraged all young people to participate in the NAPLAN testing. Unfortunately, due to the transient nature and variable attendance of the cohort, a number of Year 7 and year 9 students were absent on the day of the testing.

There were 3 young people who entered the testing room but did not attempt the test. Others who were present all refused to participate in the testing. In 2016 we will continue to strive to have young people participate in this testing.

Outcomes for Year 12 Students	
Total number of Northern Territory Certificate of Education (NTCE)	0
Percentage of Eligible Students receiving a ATAR score	0
Percentage of students awarded NTCE and awarded a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification	0
Percentage of students awarded a Vet qualification	20%
Percentage students receiving an offer.	0

During 2015 St Joseph's had 5 young people enrolled in SACE subjects but none of these young people were able to complete this program.

Apparent Student Retention Rate

St Joseph's Catholic FLC as an establishing school, began operation in 2012 and as such, would not have an enrolment base to make the apparent retention for 2015.

Considering the enrolments in year 9 in 2012 and year 12 in 2015 the apparent retention is from year 9 to year 12 is 316%. This figure is more an indication of the increasing enrolment and engagement of older students seeking our educational and wellbeing programs.

Attendance Rate

The average student attendance rate for 2015 is highlighted in the table below. The table included shows the number of enrolments and attendance across the 8 data collection periods during 2015. At the end of week 4 and 8 of each term attendance data is submitted to the Northern Territory Government. Our attendance and enrolment numbers are affected by young people moving in and out of town, cultural obligations, incarceration of young people and medical issues. Throughout 2015 St Joseph's Catholic FLC had a total active enrolment of 171 students with the highest enrolment of 110 in March.

		2015 Enrolments		
		Actual Enrolment	Passive	Active Attend %
February	(1)	97	-	46.4%
March	(2)	110	-	50.0%
May	(3)	98	-	50.0%
June	(4)	95	-	56.8%
August	(5)	109	-	54.1%
Sept	(6)	99	-	49.5%
October	(7)	90	-	46.7%
November	(8)	95	-	48.4%

Special Programs that Produce Improved Outcomes for Young People

St Joseph's Catholic FLC used the following programs to improve engagement of young people and family members during 2015.

- Hosted inaugural Youth+ Young Person Forum.
- “Back to Country” camps and family trips with family members and elders.
- Bush tucker activities including, making traditional healing lotions and seed collection.
- Community Lunch for young people and families twice a term.
- Basketball with local Police.
- Soccer - 7 a side team in local Monday night competition.
- AFL - male and female teams competing in local school competition.
- Providing breakfast, lunch and take home meal packs (when requested) free of charge.
- Offering a door to door bus service for young people with transport issues.
- School Holiday program that offered an activity each day of school holidays during 2015. Youth Workers were also available for home visits and ensured young people were prepared for school after holiday breaks.
- Yungbul Mob (as outlined below):

Aim of the Yungbul Program

There are a number of negative issues, which impact on the lives of our young people and their families and unfortunately there is sometimes a widespread view that men are the causes/culprits of these negative issues. A lot of young men are growing up believing they are the problem we want them to learn and start believing that in fact they are the key to help solve a lot of these problems in our community. We aim to do this through engaging with key community organisations/services and regular camps.

Connections with other agencies:

Akeyulerre Healing Centre: Akeyulerre have a Men's Program and we have been working in partnership with the Coordinator of that program for all of the 'Back to Country' camps. Yungbul Mob visit Akeyulerre once a week. The elders who help with the project are also relatives of our young people (grandfathers, uncles etc.). The aim of the project is not only to learn this traditional practice and keep it alive, but also to sell artefacts made in order to fund future camping trips to travel further throughout Central Australia.

Congress - Ingkintja Men's Health Clinic: The young people expressed an interest to connect with Ingkintja so that they could learn more about their health and what they can do to keep themselves healthy. Ingkintja have doctors, social workers, psychologists and counsellors available, which the young people can link into if they need to. Yungbul Mob now have a very strong relationship with Ingkintja and visit once a week.

Gap Youth and Community Centre: GYCC have a number of youth programs and facilities that our young people can utilise from a Reconnect Program (which provides support to youth at risk of homelessness), internet cafe, media program, gym, music studio and an industrial kitchen.

St Patrick's College Strathfield, Sydney: St Patrick's is an EREA Boys College in Sydney who have been on immersion trips to our school here in Alice Springs since 2013. In 2015 Yungbul Mob visited St Patrick's in Sydney which was a very eye opening and positive experience for all of our young people. Yungbul Mob are planning again to visit St Patrick's in May 2016.

EnviroBank: Yungbul Mob recently met with staff at the local EnviroBank recycling depot where we were given a number of large bags to help collect cans and bottles for recycling. Money raised from the recycling will go towards visiting St Patrick's College in Sydney.

Year 12 Cohort 2015 Post School Destination

All Year 12 students re-enrolled at St Joseph's Catholic FLC. At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2015 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 by 30 September, 2016. The following interim data reports the destinations of students as accurately as the school is able to ascertain at this point.

Co Curricular Activities

The Centre provides extensive opportunities for young people to participate in co-curricular or non-classroom 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, and intellectual and/or service related.

Co Curricular Activities offered at St Joseph's Catholic FLC in 2015

Cultural	Sporting	Intellectual	Service
Back to Country camps and Day Trips	7 a side soccer team in local completion	Youth+ Young Person forum	Recycling
Bush Medicine and Bush Tucker	Male and Female AFL teams in school competition	Drumbeat	First Aid Training
Yungbul Mob		CAAMA Amplify Program	Immersion to St Patrick's Strathfield and Wollongong FLC
Art Workshops at Araluen Art Centre			

Staff Professional Development Priorities 2015

Staff Member	In-service/Course/Conference	Date:	Support/Funding
All	Work practice reflection and planning day - each term with the support of the Youth+ Network Team	1 day/term	Youth+ Network
All	Whole Staff Days - All FLC staff across the nation come together for professional development specific to this cohort of young people Child Protection Training	July - 2 days	Youth +
Teaching Staff	Visible Learning with CEO T/L team	Various staff meetings throughout the year each semester	Paid for by St Joseph's
Teaching Staff	Working with CEO T/L staff to create Whole School Literacy / Numeracy Plans		St Joseph's
Teachers - 4 Music Worker 1 Administration Worker - 1	New Staff Days - Induction program for new staff (3 days): Trauma Informed Practice; Working with the Principles; Child Protection Training, Code of Conduct; Formation in EREA	3 Days January 2015	Youth+
Head of Campus; Associate Head of Campus	Supervision training		
All staff	Common Ground Workshop	1 day	Youth+
1 Youth Worker	Restorative Justice Framework	1 week	St Joseph's
All staff	Best Results Tool Kit - Self Care and the Incidental Counsellor	January 2015	St Joseph's
Teaching staff	Accelerated Literacy	3 days	CEO
All	First Aid Training	June 2015	St John's
1 Teacher 1 Youth Worker	Art, Ceramics	1 day	
1 Teacher Head of Campus	SACE Moderation Head of Campus PD CEO Principal's PD	10 days	Youth+ CEO

St Joseph's Catholic FLC 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 lifelong learning. The average amount spent per teacher in 2015 on professional learning was just under \$4000.

All staff engage in an Annual Performance Development and Review Process. Teaching Staff have also engaged with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Standards, as part of this review process and Teacher Registration.

Staff

The staff of St Joseph's Catholic FLC 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	8.5
Total number of Support staff	11
Total Number of Staff	19.5

Teaching Staff Qualifications	Number
Certificate	2
Graduate Diploma	4
Post Graduate Diploma	-
Bachelor Degree	6
Masters Degree	-
Doctorate	-
Other	1

The average attendance rate for teachers in the 2015 academic year was 96.04 %. 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/travel/extended leave last year has been eliminated from this calculation as he/she was replaced by a contract teacher.

The teaching staff retention rate expressed as a percentage is 75% This indicates the percentage of teachers who have continued service at the school from 2014 into 2015.

The Social Climate of the Centre

One hallmark of St Joseph's Catholic FLC is the very real climate of compassionate care evident. This is expressed through:

- Youth Workers in each and every Core Group.
- Dedicated bus runs to transport students to and from school.
- Transport also available to wider family members if and when required.
- Dedicated support provided for young people involved in the Youth Justice system.
- Breakfast, morning tea, lunch and, if required, take home meal packs provided each day free of charge.
- Review of roles in 2015 leading to appointment of Head of Wellbeing in 2016 to coordinate whole school responses to areas of concern for young people.
- Community Days attended by family members with transport provided to all community members.
- Young people, where appropriate, placed in classes with other family members to ensure a smooth transition into the school for young people.

Strategies used for Involving Parents/Carers in the education of their Young People

St Joseph's Catholic FLC recognises 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;
- 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.

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 of the school's subject offerings.

The IT infrastructure for Youth+ was expanded. This incorporated a WAN (fibre optic connections) with connections to all sites across Australia with a minimum bandwidth of 20mb. We moved from an external provider offering IT support to the establishment of an internal ICT department consisting of 4 personnel.

School Review/Survey

In 2015 St Joseph's Catholic FLC undertook the successful extension of registration with the Northern Territory School Registration Board. St Joseph's Catholic FLC also completed the annual School Improvement Renewal Framework process with the Catholic Education Office with commendations in the work undertaken to create a Whole School Literacy and Numeracy Plan and recommendations to implement strategies to implement the effectiveness of existing and new initiatives.

Progress Towards Goals for the 2015 Year

The Central West Flexi Schools Network Leadership recognise the value of strategic planning for the long term, sustainable development of programs, capital and human resources, the minimisation of exposure to risks and to assist fidelity of operation to mission. Operational goals are set each year in consultation with staff. The following outlines achievements in reaching goals in 2015 articulated in the 2014 Annual Report.

Throughout 2015 the following goals that were articulated in 2014 were achieved:

- A senior class offering SACE subjects was established.
- Certificate I in Visual Art offered through the Youth+ RTO and the successful training of a staff member to deliver Certificate II in music for 2016.
- Attendance strategies enhanced with the introduction of a traffic light system to identify young people at risk of disengagement.
- Enrolment of 100 young people and a total enrolment of 171 young people.

2015 Milestones

Throughout 2015 the following milestones were achieved at St Joseph's Catholic FLC:

- School population of over 100 young people was reached for the first time. In the August census 95 young people enrolled at the FLC.
- 171 young people were enrolled in the FLC during the course of 2015.
- Teachers worked alongside the CEO Curriculum team to design and implement a Whole School Literacy and Numeracy Plan.
- Youth+ inaugural Youth Forum hosted by St Joseph's and hosted at Ross River Resort in Alice Springs. 10 different FLC from the organisation were represented by staff and young people at this event.
- Inaugural Immersion to St Patrick's Strathfield and the Wollongong FLC by the Yungbul Mob. A group of 6 young fellows and 3 staff spent two weeks attending the different schools and attended sporting events, Royal Easter Show, Redfern Boxing Gym amongst the many highlights. St Patrick's also continued their Immersion to St Joseph's Catholic FLC bringing their 3rd Immersion group in 2015.
- Training of all teaching staff in Accelerated Literacy.
- Successful participation of female and male teams in local school AFL competition.
- A 7 a side soccer team in the local men's competition.
- All staff training in a 'Common Ground' workshop to deepen staff understanding of the philosophy that guides the practice of St Joseph's.
- Successful reregistration of St Joseph's Catholic FLC with the Northern Territory School Registration Board.

Goals for the 2016 Year

In 2016 emphasis will be given to:

- Strengthening the Whole School Literacy and Numeracy plan.
- Increasing the Accredited Learning Options for the young people enrolled at St Joseph's.
- Enhancement of both attendance and wellbeing tracking, support and intervention programs.
- Increasing enrolments to 110.

Conclusion

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