



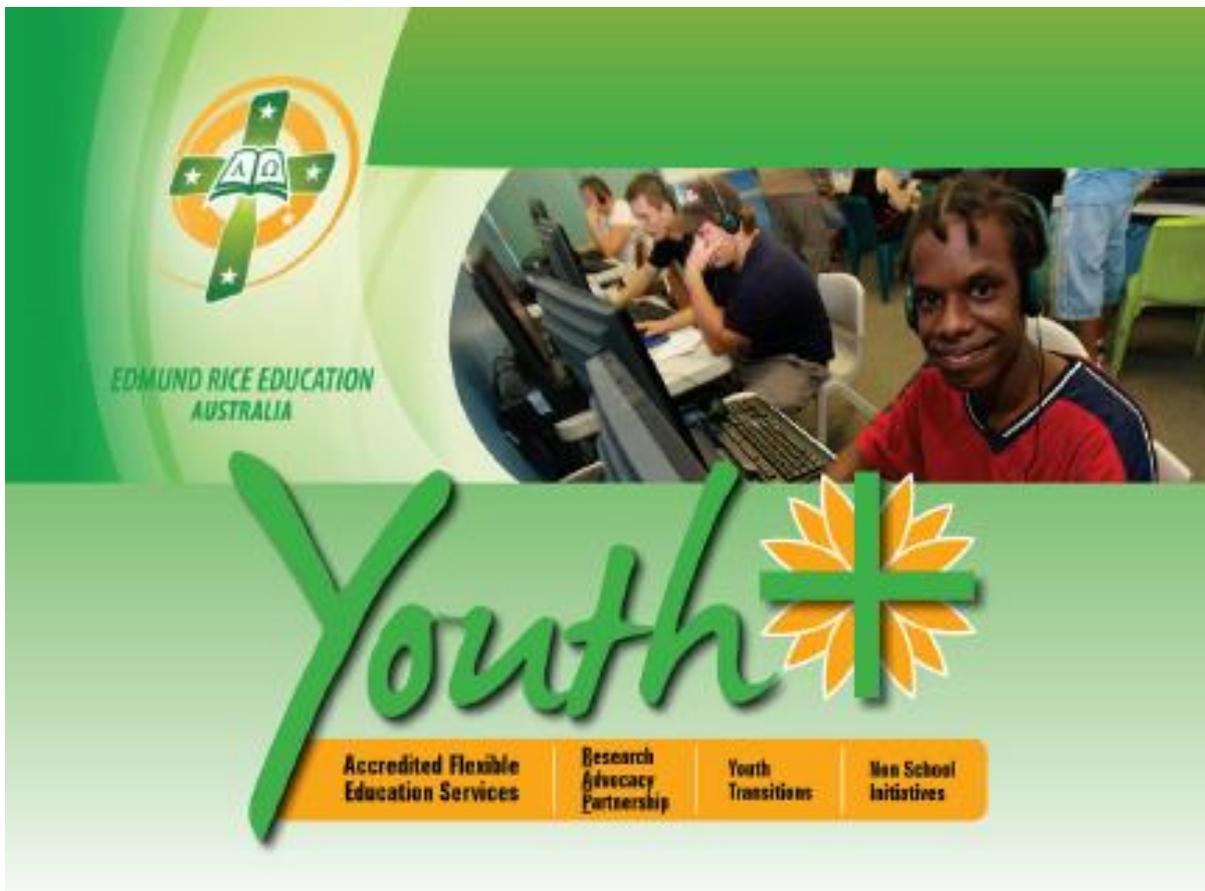
EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA

Youth+

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre

Annual Report

2015



About This Report

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards and managed by Youth+ under the governance of Edmund Rice Education Australia.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the FLC community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The Report also outlines information regarding school improvement initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year. Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and EREA.

This Report has been approved by Youth+ to ensure compliance with all BOSTES NSW requirements for Registration. This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications.

Following its submission to the Board of Studies NSW, the Report will be presented to the Wollongong FLC community, and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2016.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre
Cnr Princes Hwy and Towradgi Road
Towradgi NSW 2518
Ph: 02 4285 6810
Web: www.youthplus.edu.au

Message from Key School Bodies

Head of Campus Message

A highlight of 2015 for Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre was the establishment of our Nowra Outreach. Following requests from the local community, in July we opened an outreach service with places for up to 30 young people. The group is a true outreach, operating out of local facilities in the Nowra area, and accessing our main campus in Towradgi several times each week. The Nowra Outreach has significantly enriched our school community in many and varied ways.

We now engage with young people from three separate local government areas, and two distinct Indigenous language groups – the Tharawal and the Yuin people. This has challenged and inspired staff to learn new ways of being with our young people, incorporating cultural perspectives more authentically into our teaching programs, our daily rituals and routines and all of our professional practices. The input of local elders in Nowra has been highly valued by staff.

The growth of our school has presented challenges too in developing and maintaining a sense of connection and community. The community has responded to this challenge by expanding our outdoor adventure based learning programs. The purchase of several Stand Up Paddle Boards, camping gear and trailers enabled us to offer programs and experiences that utilise the stunning local environment to bring young people together to learn and have fun.

Many minor alterations were made to the site at Towradgi: a refurbishment of the school administration area; the installation of cabinetry in the learning spaces; and the purchase of furniture to facilitate flexible use of spaces, all contributed to a more productive work place.

The opening of our sister Flexi School in St Mary's brought terrific opportunity for staff collaboration and professional development, and rich sharing of ideas. Professional learning focused on developing integrated units of work that respond to the wellbeing needs of our young people. Units of work are engaging and meaningful for young people, utilising best practice in trauma informed educational strategies and project based learning.

School Context

Introduction

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) is a part of Edmund Rice Education Australia Youth+ and is conducted in accordance with the Youth+ philosophy and principles. Wollongong FLC commenced operation as a registered Non-Government School in 2013 and is part of a national association (EREA) of forty-eight schools which includes, in 2016, eighteen Flexible Learning Centres.

The philosophy of the Wollongong FLC draws on the spirit and vision of Edmund Rice Education Australia and is grounded in the Edmund Rice Education Australia Charter document (see www.erea.edu.au). The document has a clear commitment to social justice, inclusive communities, liberating education and gospel spirituality, 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” (for self, others and environment), “Safe and Legal” environment, “Participation” (have a go) and “Honesty” (being fair dinkum) among all participants of the Wollongong 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, 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”

Wollongong FLC 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 Wollongong FLC, and the development of moral reasoning through the application of the four principles prepares young people 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.

Wollongong FLC 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 culture, and from backgrounds of socio-economic disadvantage. Young people are exposed to learning experiences that develop understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultural values that constitute Australian society. Importantly young people are encouraged to participate in decision making processes that affect the school community, their own lives and the society in which they live. Learning is focused around the individual needs of young people and progress is carefully documented and monitored. Young people, in conjunction with their teachers and youth workers, draft learning plans with articulated education pathways.

Contextual Information about the School

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre provides educational alternatives to young people in the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Shoalhaven local government areas. With its main campus located in Towradgi, north of Wollongong, daily bus runs collect young people from the neighbouring Shellharbour LGA, about 20km south of the main campus. In 2015, the school responded to requests from the local community in Shoalhaven to open a service in the Nowra area. All of these locations are contain pockets of extreme disadvantage characterised by long term generational unemployment, high levels of contact with the justice system and contact with Family and Community Services, drug and alcohol dependency and low levels of educational achievement. The table below illustrates the complex issues facing the families of young people who attend Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre and its Nowra Outreach.

Indicators of Disadvantage	Wollongong	Shellharbour	Shoalhaven
Criminal Convictions per 1000 pop'n	175	110	63
Disability Support per 1000 pop'n	115	71	43
Domestic Violence per 1000 pop'n	140	103	29
Housing stress per 1000 pop'n	231	226	240
Juvenile Convictions per 1000 pop'n	167	121	70
Long term unemployed per 1000 pop'n	131	75	45
Low family income per 1000 pop'n	259	99	166
Prison admissions per 1000 pop'n	163	91	22
Psychiatric Admissions per 1000 pop'n	75	55	43
Readiness Schooling per 1000 pop'n	267	95	159
Rent Assistance per 1000 pop'n	168	53	54
Unemployed per 1000 pop'n	172	106	68
Y3 Numeracy not 'at or above national minimum standards' NAPLAN testing in each counting area	271	77	114
Y3 Reading not 'at or above national minimum standards' NAPLAN testing in each counting area	338	116	111
Y9 Numeracy not 'at or above national minimum standards' NAPLAN testing in each counting area	238	173	129
Y9 Reading not 'at or above national minimum standards' NAPLAN testing in each counting area	229	141	180
Young adults (17 to 24) not engaged in full time work or study in each counting area	265	133	78

Data from Jesuit Social Services *Dropping Off the Edge 2015* (<http://www.dote.org.au/map>)

Background to the establishment of the Nowra Outreach

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre has had ongoing interest from agencies and schools in the Shoalhaven area for some time, and has from time to time had enrolments from young people from Nowra into Towradgi classes. Many of the young people currently enrolled have strong family and social connections with the Shoalhaven area. For example:

- A young man has attended Wollongong Flexi for the past 12 months. His family lives in Nowra, but mother was employed in Wollongong. There was no suitable alternative educational setting for this young man in the Nowra area. He continued to attend the main campus in Towradgi, travelling by train since his mother's employment in Wollongong has ended.
- A young woman who was enrolled in Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre has been transferred from refuge accommodation in Wollongong to more permanent accommodation in Nowra area.
- In March 2015 the school was approached by the regional Out of Home Care Co-ordinator for DEC regarding potential enrolment of a young woman who was to transfer from her family home in Nowra to a kinship placement in the Wollongong area. The enrolment was successful, and this young person is still enrolled and attending the Wollongong site regularly.

There is a recognised need for services for young people in the area, as described in this recent email from the Aboriginal Caseworker for Juvenile Justice in Nowra:

I am a caseworker at the Juvenile Justice Office in Nowra where we are currently witnessing an increase in the amount of young people being referred to us by the Children's Court Magistrate or transferred to us from other JJ offices around the state.

There are two caseworkers for the Shoalhaven area. Currently, Nowra JJ have nearly 40 young people that require supervision in some form.

Our main focus is to provide community based interventions for juvenile offenders to address their offending behaviours and reduce the risk associated with re-offending.

We are very concerned for the future of our young people and we also hold concerns for the community given the nature of some of the offences committed.

I am asking you all for information about any youth programs in the Shoalhaven that are currently running or are in the process of being developed.

Could you please provide contact details for the program facilitator of ANY youth programs that you are aware of in the Shoalhaven.

I understand that some of the programs do not target the young people we work with and may not be suitable for our clients given the risks associated with our clients, however, my personal opinion is that these are the young people who require intervention to give our young people more of a chance participate appropriately in the community, thus making it safer for the wider community.

The school's executive were approached by a consortium of Nowra local agencies and schools in May 2015, and a meeting was held at which the invitation was extended to Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre to provide an educational alternative for disengaged and disenfranchised young people in the local area. The Nowra Outreach opened in July 2015 with enrolments of 30 young people by August 2015. The Nowra Outreach is now a well-established program, including two class groups. The young people access a range of programs and services, accessing the main campus in Towradgi several times each week, as well as utilising local facilities in the Nowra area as appropriate.

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.

Operation by Principle and Common Ground – (Actions taken by the school to promote respect and responsibility)

The concept of 'common ground' applies to all who choose to participate in our services. Adults and young people alike commit to participate in a learning environment that is democratic, relational and operates through key principles.

Relationships at our services are based on a respect for personal dignity and recognition of difference. An emphasis is placed on the peaceful resolution of conflict and spirituality is recognised as a universal human experience. Rather than being rule governed, the school uses principles, which are agreed upon (established common ground) as a basis for respectful social engagement amongst the community including young people, parents and staff. The principles are:

**RESPECT,
PARTICIPATION,
SAFE and LEGAL, and
HONESTY**

These principles are used to guide group relationships. They represent broad directions for group practice and establish a common ethical framework which promotes appropriate learning and personal relationships.

The consequence of operating within a common ground set of principles is that all group participants, whether they are staff, young people or parents, are responsible and accountable for their behaviour, while allowing everyone to have a voice. Within this framework emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for the articulation of issues and their resolution. Considerable time, sensitivity and skill are often required to allow for briefing, challenge and registration of on-going expectations. Honest and open communication enables young people, parents/carers and staff to demonstrate their satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the school.

Parent and Carer Support and Involvement

Wollongong FLC recognises that parents/carers are the primary educators of their young people, while remaining sensitive to the fact that many young people live independently of their families. We recognise our critical role in educating parents and carers, and being the link between young people and their carers in times of stress and crisis.

Community Leaders have regular contact with parents and carers via phone conversations and catch-ups that happen on an almost daily basis. The importance of this informal contact cannot be overestimated. Parents and carers often phone wellbeing staff or Head of Campus to share information or to ask for advice, and most particularly in times of crisis.

Parents and carers are invited into Operation by Principle as participants in Common Ground meetings with staff and young people. Staff seek the input of parents and carers in negotiating a way forward with young people. Staff often conduct home visits to encourage engagement with programs.

The Flexible Learning Centre supports and encourages this role of parents/carers through: community lunches, information evenings, newsletters, cultural and social celebrations, parents/carers meetings and home visits.

Best Practice Guidelines

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre identifies a number of best practice guidelines supportive of meaningful socially inclusive educational experiences for young people who have experienced trauma, mental illness, disengagement from education, or family and social disruption. 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.

Diagnostic Testing

Upon enrolment, all young people complete Compass testing in literacy and numeracy. Compass is a computer based assessment of core literacy and numeracy skills developed by ACER. Compass testing provides vital information for teachers in creating appropriate adjustments to the learning plan for individual young people. It is a key component of the Personal Learning Plan.

Compass is specifically designed for disengaged and educationally marginalised young people and adults. It provides a standardised assessment of literacy and numeracy that can be delivered in a flexible, non-intimidating test environment. Testing does not have to take place in an educational setting. This assists with assessing those disengaged from education as traditional forms of testing can act as a barrier towards reengagement with formal learning.

Compass is aligned to the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF), the common national reference point for describing performance in the core skill areas.

Personal Learning Plans

Every young person develops a Personal Learning Plan in collaboration with their carers and key workers at the school. Personal Learning Plans are a means for young people to negotiate and articulate their learning, social, emotional and personal needs and goals. Personal Learning Plans are informed by diagnostic testing in literacy and numeracy. They are dynamic documents that respond to the changing contexts of young people as they progress through stages of life. The Personal Learning Plans are revisited frequently throughout the year.

Personal learning plans provide valuable information for teachers as they develop learning programs that are engaging and relevant to the young person. Importantly, they also guide the development of appropriate adjustments in the learning program.

Family/Carer Involvement

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

Rhythm, Routine and Ritual

Structure and predictability helps young people who have experienced trauma to feel safe and enables them to take safe risks. Wollongong FLC has built routine and ritual into daily practice in order to create a calm and predictable learning environment for young people. This also produces positive outcomes in young people's ability to negotiate and communicate, to think critically, to make decisions and to build their social capability.

Each day the community conducts an extended check-in session at the beginning of the day. This session allows young people to share issues of concern, address problems, air grievances and communicate openly with staff. It also allows days of significance to be marked, celebrated and discussed, for example International Women's Day.

A shorter check out session is held at the day's conclusion. The check out session is an opportunity to reflect on the day's events and celebrate individual and community achievements.

Each learning session or activity begins with a Working Agreement, in which staff negotiate with young people the ways in which Common Ground will be expressed through the Four Principles within the time period.

Learning Choices

The school's educational approach includes flexible timetabling, smaller learning groups, and relevant curriculum. This enables the delivery of creative responses to the learning needs of the individual young person, incorporating their cultural and spiritual backgrounds.

The school's learning programs comply with NSW Board of Studies Mandatory Course requirements for Stage 4 and 5 of schooling, with a strong emphasis on providing meaningful and engaging learning.

Multi-Disciplinary Teams

Team members use a multi-disciplinary approach to provide health, educational, cultural, social and emotional support for young people. Educational, community and allied health professional are encouraged to collaborate closely to provide wrap around care for the young person. Information is shared and expertise is respected. Appropriate team members are encouraged to develop links with external support agencies (e.g. Child and Youth Mental Health Services, Drug & Alcohol services, accommodation services, counselling services).

Young Person Support

Each young person at Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre belongs to a Community Group which is facilitated in partnership by a teacher and youth worker called Community Group Leaders. The role of the Community Group Leader is to establish a close relationship to the young person, collaborate with them to develop a Personal Learning Plan, monitor their progress, advocate on their behalf, provide advice, support and direct referrals in times of acute distress, and to support the young person to achieve their stated personal and educational goals. The role of Community Leader is complex and broad, and the tasks of Community Leader include:

- monitoring and supporting young person's achievement and progress towards achieving the goals articulated in their Personal Learning Plan
- creating and implementing appropriate adjustments to learning programs as described in the Personal Learning Plan
- maintaining the close partnership between school, young person and parent/carer
- supporting the young person and their families in times of emotional crisis or practical need

- working in partnership with other agencies who are involved with young people e.g. Department of Family and Community Services, Juvenile Justice, Headspace, Area Health services, Indigenous Health services, employment agencies, and community agencies
- supporting and mentoring young people who live independently
- supporting young people with issues of drug misuse, mental health and self-harm

Curriculum

The Wollongong FLC provides holistic learning experiences that address the social needs of young people, and promotes their emotional, cognitive, spiritual and academic development. Learning programs are developed with the intention to:

- empower young people to take personal responsibility for their learning
- support young people to become independent learners
- address deficits or gaps in literacy and numeracy
- develop in young people the skills and dispositions of twenty first century learners including collaboration, innovation and knowledge creation,
- recognise and celebrate the skills and knowledge of young people,
- enable young people to experience challenge within a safe and supportive learning environment
- provide a sense of achievement that is relevant and authentic to the real world.

Learning experiences address NSW Board of Studies Mandatory Courses for Year Seven to Ten, with a strong focus on Literacy and Numeracy. Courses offered appear below.

NSW BOS Mandatory Courses	
Stage 4	English, Mathematics, Science, Health and Physical Education, Geography, History, Music, Visual Arts
Stage 5	English, Mathematics, Science, Health and Physical Education, Geography, History
VET Courses	
Certificate II in Functional Literacy	

Extra-Curricular, Engagement and Wellbeing Programs

The following programs achieve improved outcomes for students at the Centre. All programs have a strong focus on holistic development of young people, with the intention of building their personal and social capacity and developing mind, body and soul.

PCYC Program

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre has strong partnerships with local PCYCs in Shoalhaven, North Wollongong, Lake Illawarra and Bulli.

Project Warrior

The school accesses a local gym to engage in strength and fitness training. This program is enhanced to include leadership and personal challenge activities.

Access Community Group Community Garden

Small groups of young people attend a local community organisation to work with volunteers in the community garden. This also enables young people to connect with youth services at the centre.

Induction Program

The period of transition into a new school is a challenging time for young people. Upon enrolment, young people attend a two day course to orient them to life at the FLC, and to begin to develop their understanding of Operation by Principles and Common Ground. The program is run by the wellbeing team, and includes hands on activities and initiative games designed to build teamwork skills and increase social capacity. The program gives young people the opportunity to be introduced to the outside agencies who support our work, such as PCYC.

An integral part of the Induction Program is the completion of Compass Testing and an Individual Plan or PLP in collaboration with the young person's parents/carers.

Personal Challenge Program

Young people set personal goals for themselves as part of the PLP process, and then choose from a range of personal challenge activities that will allow them to demonstrate new skills in a supported environment.

Outdoor Education Program

Young people are encouraged to utilise the local environment including bush settings, river adventures and ocean activities as part of an enriching outdoor education program. Activities are designed to build resilience, trust and team work among participants.

Circus Monoxide

Wollongong FLC has developed a strong partnership with a local arts group called Circus Monoxide. Young people engage in a circus skills program designed to build confidence and resilience, teamwork and fun.

Young Person Enrolments

2015 Young Person Enrolments	
Girls	32
Boys	51
Total	83
Indigenous	42
LBOTE	NIL

Characteristics of the Student Body

The young people represent a diverse population of indigenous and non-indigenous males and females of secondary school age. The young people who attend the Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre have typically experienced one or more significant and complex educational, social, developmental, psychological, health, legal or familial situations which demand unique responses.

Some young people present with diagnosed disabilities but many show signs of learning difficulties. The support for our young people is embedded within an educational framework but also typically involve medical, multidisciplinary, legal and/or social support personnel and systems.

Outcomes of standardised testing NAPLAN 2015

	Reading		Persuasive Writing		Spelling		Grammar and Punctuation		Numeracy	
Year 7	-		-		-		-		-	
		ALL 546		ALL 511		ALL 547		ALL 541		ALL 543
Year 9	-		183 120-245		491 439-542		515 463-567		434 395-473	
		ALL 580		ALL 547		ALL 583		ALL 568		ALL 592

Post School destinations

Destination	Number of Young People
Supported Work Placement	3
ADHC funded training	1
Apprenticeship	1
Employment	2

Parent, Young Person and Staff Satisfaction

At the end of each day, during Community Check-Out meetings, all members of the community put forward their 'highlights and gratitude' for the day. This routine was echoed in our end of year Celebration of Learning and Awards Ceremony, where highlights from young people, staff and parents/carers formed the conclusion of the ceremony. A summary of the highlights provides the most appropriate description of satisfaction among all community members of Wollongong FLC.

- *My favourite learning highlight was the excursions*
- *I completed a Barista Basics course*
- *My most grateful learning experience of the year was Maths. The best part of coming to Flexi is playing basketball in the breaks. I gained a professional qualification this year also: Senior First Aid*
- *I loved being able to go on a 4 day trip to QLD, but my favourite highlight of the year was playing bubble soccer and going to Project Warrior.*
- *Our school would just die without such great and outgoing people*
- *I believe we are a trustworthy community*
- *I like that we are people who can do and put up with lots.*
- *I love the friendship between workers and students.*
- *My overall highlight is how accepting everyone here is.*
- *I am very impressed by the support given to my step grand-daughter... without the FLC many teenagers will be left to flounder in the community.*
- *I'm grateful for the laughs we have every day.*

Professional Learning

- Individual reflective supervision – available to all staff
- Literacy workshops – All Staff
- Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training – all staff
- Youth+ Network New Staff Induction – 7 staff
- Youth+ Network Whole Staff Conference – all staff
- Technology of Participation – all staff (4 days)
- Curriculum development and planning – all staff
- Schools Link Network Meeting – 2 staff
- Alternative Education Conference AIS – 3 staff

Details of the Teaching Staff

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teachers responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*	100%
Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications	0%
Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	0%

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff Retention

Workforce Composition

Teachers	7
Youth Workers	6
Support Staff	4
Staff identifying as Indigenous	3
Total number of staff	17

School Policies

The following gives a summary of some of the school policies in use. There have been no changes to these policies in 2015. Policies are accessible from the school and are made available to every parent and young person at an enrolment interview or via the school website:

<http://www.youthplus.edu.au/schools-services-details/youth-schools-network/flcwoollongong/woollongong-flexible-learning-centre.html>

Enrolment Policy

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre offers a non-fee paying, 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, ethnic and religious backgrounds, with particular sensitivity to Indigenous culture, and from backgrounds of socio-economic disadvantage.

The young people enrolled have typically experienced one or more significant and complex educational, social, developmental, psychological, health, legal or familial situations which demand unique responses as young people who are at risk or have disengaged: young people in out of home care, Koorie young people, young offenders, young people affected by homelessness, newly arrived and refugee young people, young parents and carers, young people with disabilities and young people with mental health concerns.

This policy complies with all applicable State and Commonwealth laws. Enrolment interviews are conducted to assess a young person's needs in the light of the above criteria and to assess the Flexible Learning Centre's ability and resources to meet those needs.

For informal care arrangements, where a student is not living with a parent/guardian but is living in an informal care arrangement, the school may accept an enrolment form signed by the informal carer if the carer provides a signed Informal Relative Carer's Statutory Declaration to the school. The informal carer may be a relative, significant friend or a person within the child's extended social network.

Register of enrolments

A data base register of enrolments is maintained that contains the following information for each young person:

- their name, date of birth, age and address
- the name and contact details of any parent or guardian of the young person
- emergency telephone numbers, including that of a nominated doctor
- the date the young person ceased to be enrolled and any applicable data from previous school and year
- the date of enrolment
- details of medical or other conditions for which the child may need special evidence of residency.

Student Welfare Policy

The Wollongong FLC seeks to provide quality education for all young people, taking account of their age, background, ability and interests, to assist them to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and for the wider community.

Young people are better prepared for learning when they are healthy, safe and happy, therefore, young people welfare is the responsibility of all staff working in a whole school context. Student learning cannot be separated from welfare. Helping young people to learn effectively and to develop positive attitudes and behaviours are goals of the Wollongong FLC community. This requires that each young person is educated in an environment which provides for their individual development.

Anti-bullying Policy

Respect for others is essential to enabling the establishment of and support for positive relationships. Any form of bullying is contrary to the rights of the individual, weakens morale and interferes with the effectiveness of the work and learning environment and may be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of an individual. This community will address bullying by implementing educational activities to inform the community about bullying and its related effects and implement protocols that sensitively and immediately manage incidents of reported bullying or harassment and provide support for the victim and perpetrator.

Discipline Policy

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre aims to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Every person has a right to enjoy their time at school. Respect for others is expected.

When inappropriate behaviour occurs the following dimensions will be considered in the light of operation by principle

- student behaviour education and pastoral care
- pastoral care for the whole school community
- student connectedness and engagement
- a Restorative Practice approach
- operation by principle as the framework for negotiation

Complaints and Grievances Policy

Wollongong FLC respects the right of all members of the community to have access to a process, which will give full and fair consideration to any grievance that may arise. All grievances and actions taken will be recorded in a School Complaints Register. The process endeavours to hear in a timely and equitable manner any grievance raised to ensure that the principles of natural justice are followed.

A grievance is any written complaint made against a member of the School community or School in respect to any action, policy, process or situation relevant to the running of the School by:

- a member of the School community
- any member of the public
- any legal identity

Milestones of 2015

Learning

2015 was a year of significant expansion in learning choices for young people.

- Eight young people achieved a Certificate in Barista Basics
- Five Koori young men participated in a Certificate I in construction course at TAFE. As part of the course requirements, they also achieved their White Card, and made a footstool.
- Six young people and one staff member completed Senior First Aid training.
- Two young people graduated with a Certificate II in Foundations of Literacy
- We continued to depth our integrated programs of mandatory BOSTES courses for both Stage 4 and Stage 5.
- Active learning continued to be a strong focus of life at Wollongong Flexi. We continued our connection with our local gym, Project Warrior, where the trainers continue to challenge young people to be strong team members and inspiring leaders for each other.
- We began a partnership with Circus Monoxide, a local community arts organisation, in which our young people developed social skills, confidence and found their voice through circus. Young people enjoyed expressing their incredible creativity in this way, and through our connection with Circus Monoxide, a group of young people were able to participate in a workshop with performers from Cirque de Soliel.

Welfare/personal learning

- A group of young women engaged with Seasons for Growth – a grief and loss program that helps people accept change in their lives. The program was facilitated by Catholicare in Wollongong. As part of the program, young people completed a journal documenting their reflections and affirming their strengths.
- We formed our young men's group, with a strong focus on social skills and positive communication. Many of the participants in this group made wonderful and creative contributions to our physical environment through graffiti art.

Community

- Undoubtedly the highlight of the year for a group of young people was the road trip they took to Queensland to meet young people from Hemmant Flexible Learning Centre. This was a great opportunity for those young people to explore their boundaries and challenge themselves to move out of their comfort zone. They played a great game of touch with the Hemmant team, and returned home proud of their strong representation of our community in Queensland.
- Staff selection processes identify staff members who are flexible, are able to relate to young people, are willing to negotiate, and are clear about operation by principles
- Wollongong FLC engaged in a process of Renewal through EREA, which explored the ways in which our school community expresses its commitment to the Touchstones and Charter of EREA.

Priority Areas for Improvement

Our priority areas for improvement for 2015 have been identified as:

- Deepening our understanding of Common Ground and worker skills in implementing Common Ground Conversations
- Further development of Literacy and Numeracy programs that address gaps in learning for our cohort of young people
- Development of the Transition to Work program, incorporating Certificate II Functional Literacy
- Preparation and planning for a move to a new site.

Finances

Wollongong's 2015 financial information

Financial Performance

REPORTING FRAMEWORK	MODIFIED CASH	\$
Recurrent income		Tuition
School fees		
Other fee income		
Private income		50,045
State government recurrent grants		234,520
Australian government recurrent grants		1,763,461
Total recurrent income		2,048,026
Recurrent Expenditure		Tuition
Salaries; allowances and related expenses		1,033,451
Non salary expenses		588,473
Total recurrent expenditure		1,621,924
Capital income and expenditure		Tuition
Government capital grants		
Capital fees and levies		
Other capital income		
Total capital income		
Total capital expenditure		270,460
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)		
Total opening balance		
Total closing balance		

Conclusion

The Wollongong FLC continues to offer an education option for those who through marginalisation cannot access a standardised education. Wollongong FLC maintains an inclusive community and works to provide care, hope and socialisation skills as well as an academic learning program. We aim to build upon the successes of the past to realise our vision of the future.

Kate Burrett

Head of Campus

Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre

Chloe Hand

Network Principal

Youth+, Edmund Rice Education Australia