



**Mount Isa**  
Edmund Rice Education Australia  
**Flexible Learning Centre**  
74 Abel Smith Parade

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2010**

This annual report for 2010 is published to provide information about the Mount Isa 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.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mount Isa commenced operation in 2010 and is part of a national association of forty schools which includes, in 2010, six flexible learning centres and attached outreach programs operating across thirteen sites in Queensland.

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.cfc.edu.au/Province\\_Schools/Charter%20Booklet%20010704.pdf](http://www.cfc.edu.au/Province_Schools/Charter%20Booklet%20010704.pdf)

Mount Isa is a co-educational Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition. It is one of, in 2010, six schools in the Edmund Rice Flexible Learning Centre Network.

The philosophy of the Mount Isa 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 Mount Isa 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, students 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 Mount Isa 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 students and their families, supporting and celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each individual young person. The school 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.

### **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”

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre works with young people who are vulnerable and experience a complexity of inter-related needs. As discussed above, participation and retention are key elements in the philosophy of, Mount Isa 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.

Mount Isa 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. Students 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. Students 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. Students, 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.

## **PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM**

Each young person at Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre has a culturally appropriate Pastoral Care team. To support the number of young people enrolled, this team is made up of the teachers, Youth Workers and Educational Support Workers who work each day with the 19 young people who were enrolled. At the Mount Isa site this team comprises their classroom teacher for core literacy/numeracy and at least one other significant worker.

This worker is chosen by the young person. 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
- A culturally appropriate support focus
- 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
- Working with the Child Protection Officer as required.

The total 2010 enrolment of the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre in full time equivalent students is shown below.

<b>Year Level</b>	<b>Students</b>
<b>8</b>	2
<b>9</b>	3
<b>10</b>	8
<b>11</b>	5
<b>12</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	19

## CURRICULUM

The aim of the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre is to respond to the complex needs of disadvantaged young people who have been marginalised from mainstream education. The Centre achieves its aim by building honest and authentic relationships with students and their families, supporting and celebrating the uniqueness and dignity of each individual student. The Mount Isa 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.

The Mount Isa 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. Students 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. Students 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. Students, 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.

Subjects offered at various year levels include:

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre commenced in 2010. Due to the limited students Mount Isa Flexible Learning centre did not have any authority registered subjects nor certificate courses in the senior years

	<b>CORE</b>	<b>ELECTIVE</b>
<b>Year 8</b>	English Maths SOSE Information Communication Technology Sport and Recreation	Cultural Studies Science Media Studies Art
<b>Years 9 – 10</b>	English Maths SOSE Information Communication	Cultural Studies Science Media Studies Art

	Technology Sport and Recreation	
--	------------------------------------	--

## **OUTCOMES**

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre young people chose not to participate in the NAPLAN assessment task for year 9 in 2010.

## **APPARENT STUDENT RETENTION RATE**

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre was in the first year of operation as a separately registered school for 2010 so there is no student retention data to report.

## **ATTENDANCE RATE**

The average student attendance rate for 2010 was 65%. This number excludes students who terminated enrolment during the year or who were absent for extended explained absences.

## **Outcomes for Year 12 Students**

In its first year of operation there are no Yr 12 results to report from the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT PRODUCE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS**

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre is the only remote school for EREA. The majority of these students are Indigenous with English as their 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Language. Given the isolation within the Indigenous communities, adjustment / support for urban ways of living needed to be addressed and included measures such as the following:

- Alcohol and drugs, volatile substance misuse information / workshops
  - Adequate standards of numeracy and literacy to complete school and transition into employment:
  - Cyber bullying information
  - Mental health workshops linked to social, emotional and well being
  - Transportation to school and to related activities
  - Homelessness support
  - Domestic violence referrals
  - Maintaining strong links within the Indigenous communities
-

## YEAR 12 COHORT 2010 POST SCHOOL DESTINATION

In its first year of operation there are no Yr 12 results to report from the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre.

## CO CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Centre provides extensive opportunities for students to participate in co curricular activities at their level and within their areas of interest. Participation is encouraged. The broad range of opportunities or choices for students includes activities that are described as cultural, sporting and or intellectual related.

<b>Cultural</b>	<b>Sporting</b>	<b>Intellectual</b>
Aboriginal artist in residence	Rodeo workshops	English
Aboriginal History story telling	PCYC activities	Maths
Indigenous dance and Art	Fishing activities	History

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 2010

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre is committed to the ongoing professional development and formation of staff. This continues to enrich the educational opportunities provided for our students and models to our young people the modern reality of life long learning. The following priorities were identified in the Centre's 2010 Operational Plan:

- Student Protection
- Curriculum Development
- Formation in the operation by "Principles"
- Flexible Learning Education

The average amount spent per teacher in 2010 on professional learning was approximately \$25,000. This represents 2% of the annual budget of the Centre.

## THE SOCIAL CLIMATE OF THE CENTRE

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

- Pastoral care
  - Employment (Break thru)
  - Indigenous knowledge
-

- Community Engagement
- Social and Emotion wellbeing Program
- Remote Primary Health Program

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

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre recognizes that parents / carers are the primary educators of their children. The work of the school is most successful when it collaborates effectively with parents. The school supports and encourages this role of parents through:

- Information evenings,
- Newsletters
- Parents and carer community celebrations,
- Community Network agency celebrations, and
- The voluntary contribution of distinctive skills and enthusiasm of parents. These are gratefully acknowledged and celebrated.

## **STAFF**

The staff of the Mount Isa 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:

<b>Total number of teachers</b>	5
<b>Total number of Support staff</b>	4
<b>Total Number of Staff</b>	9

<b>Teaching Staff Qualifications</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Certificate</b>	2
<b>Diploma</b>	
<b>Post Graduate Diploma</b>	4
<b>Masters Degree</b>	
<b>Doctorate</b>	1
<b>Other</b>	

The average attendance rate for teachers in the 2010 academic year was 96.5%. 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.

As the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre commenced operation in 2010 there are no **staff retention rates** to report.

## **INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

---

Mount Isa will be apart of the 2011 federal government Information communication strategy. In recent times, substantial change has occurred in the provision of computer hardware and software for students 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 subjects continues to evolve across the variety the school's subject offerings.

## **PARENT AND STAFF SATISFACTION**

The school was in discussion with parents and community organisation on a regular base due to the issues impacting on young people and their lifestyle. The staffs were appointed in 2010 under contract arrangements, 2011 will be the start for staff satisfaction process.

## **PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS FOR THE 2010 YEAR**

- The goal for 2010 was to achieve registration for Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre. Following an audit the provisional registration was upgraded to full registration.

## **GOALS FOR THE 2011 YEAR**

The goals for 2011 are to strength the curriculum activities and partnerships for the young people to have a various VET programs and career and employment opportunities.

In 2011 emphasis will be given to:

- Alcohol, drug and volatile substance misuse
- Recreation and entertainment
- Social and emotional wellbeing, self-esteem and mental health
- Strengthening parent and extended family support
- Embedding Indigenous perspectives
- Youth mentoring programs

## **2010 MILESTONES**

The 2010 milestones include:


- The application for registration for Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre to be a stand-alone Non State secondary school.
  - Building structures and programs to address the particular personal, educational and training needs for the young people who joined the community.
-



## CONCLUSION

This report has been compiled to summarise the outcomes, success and future action that were derived from community consultation and young people input throughout 2010 to sustain the school in the Mount Isa community. The report will be disseminated to School Parent and Community Forum for the school and with some of the topics that will be address:

- Alcohol, drug and volatile substance misuse
- Education, training and employment
- Recreation and entertainment
- Social and emotional Well being, self-esteem and mental health
- Strengthening parent and extended family support
- Safe and legal supports
- Alternative education
- Embedding Indigenous perspectives
- Literacy and numeracy

<i>Thelma Parker</i>	
Signature Head of Campus Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre	Signature Principal Flexible Learning Centre Network