



**Mount Isa
Flexible Learning Centre**
74 Abel Smith Parade
Mount Isa QLD 4825

ANNUAL REPORT 2011

This annual report for 2011 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 Flexible Learning Centre commenced operation in 2010 and is part of a national association of forty schools which includes, in 2011, 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.erea.edu.au/our-identity/index.cfm?loadref=175>

Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre 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, 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.

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.

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. 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.

PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM

Each young person at Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre has a Pastoral Care team. At the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre 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
- 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 Chaplain, the Family Worker, the Youth Support Coordinator and access to the Network Child Protection Officer as required.

The total 2011 enrolment of the Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre in full time equivalent students is shown below.

Year Level	Students
8	6
9	2
10	9
11	11
12	19
Total	47

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.

Subjects offered at various year levels include:

	CORE	ELECTIVE
Year 8	Literacy	Cultural Studies
	Numeracy	Science
	Physical Education	Media Studies
	Studies of Science and Environment	Visual Art
	Information Technology	
Years 9 – 10	English	Cultural Studies
	Mathematics	Science
	Studies of Science and Environment	Media Studies
	Physical Education	Art
	Information Technology	

	Authority Subjects	Authority Registered Subjects	Certificate Courses
Years 11 - 12			Functional Literacy
			Functional Mathematics
			License 4 Life
			Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
			Indigenous Languages
			Certificate I Hospitality
			Certificate II Hospitality
			Certificate II Hairdressing
			Certificate II Beauty
			Certificate I Work Education
			Certificate I Business
			Certificate I Information Technology
			Certificate II Music

OUTCOMES

National Assessment Program Literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) results. Reading Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy in Year 9.

Domain	Measures	Yr 9 2011
Reading	Average score for the school	511.5
	Average score for Queensland	572.4
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	91.6%
Writing	Average score for the school	484.9
	Average score for Queensland	564.4
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	85%
Spelling	Average score for the school	526.9
	Average score for Queensland	575.1
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	90.2%
Grammar and Punctuation	Average score for the school	497.0
	Average score for Queensland	566.8
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	89.6%
Numeracy	Average score for the school	67.4
	Average score for Queensland	574.4
	For the school the percentage of students at or above the national minimum standard.	92.8%

APPARENT STUDENT RETENTION RATE

In 2010 Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre Secondary College was in its first year of operating as a separately registered school. A retention rate cannot be calculated.

ATTENDANCE RATE

The average student attendance rate for 2011 was 48%. 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 Senior Certificates awarded	NIL
Percentage of Overall Position (OP) – eligible students with OP 1 – 15	N/A
Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates and awarded a	N/A

Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification	
Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates with OP – eligibility or awarded a Vet qualification	N/A
Percentage of Queensland tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving an offer.	N/A
The median score for OP - eligible students	N/A

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 3rd or 4th 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 2011 POST SCHOOL DESTINATION

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2011 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, 2011. The following interim data reports the destinations of students as accurately as the school is able to ascertain at this point.

School Year – 2011	Number of Students in each category	Percentage of Students in each category
University (degree)	NIL	
VET total (Cert IV+ III, I-II, apprenticeship, traineeship)	NIL	
Working full-time	2	10.5%
Working part-time/casual	1	5.2%
Seeking work	2	10.5%
Not studying or in the labour force	NIL	

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 and or service related.

Cultural	Sporting	Intellectual
Indigenous Dance	Basketball	English
Indigenous Art	Fishing	Maths
Indigenous Storytelling	Golf	Music
	Lawn Bowls	History
	Ten Pin Bowling	

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 2011

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 young people and models to our young people the modern reality of life long learning. The following priorities were identified in the Centre’s 2011 Operational Plan:

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- Student Protection 8
- Curriculum Development 3
- Formation in the operation by “Principles” 9
- Flexible Learning Education 9

The average amount spent per teacher in 2011 on professional learning was \$1500

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 brokering (Break thru)
- Indigenous knowledge – Culturally appropriate practices and embedded within the curriculum.
- Community Engagement – Parents / carers always welcomed and wider community agency partnerships forged.
- 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 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
- The production and distribution of subject selection handbooks,
- 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 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:

Total number of teachers	3
Total number of Support staff	5
Total Number of Staff	9

Teaching Staff Qualifications	Number
Certificate	
Diploma	1
Post Graduate Diploma	3
Bachelors Degree	3
Masters Degree	1
Doctorate	
Other	

The average attendance rate for teachers in the 2011 academic year was 97.5%. 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 or who would have been replaced whilst on other forms of leave such as long service or maternity leave.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

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.

2011 saw further rollout of the 1 to 1 computers for secondary students under the federal government's Digital Education Revolution. Mt Isa Flexible Learning Centre integrated the use of notebooks and Apple Macs across the school curriculum.

SCHOOL REVIEW / SURVEYS

The Flexible Learning Centre network reviewed its leadership structure across 2010 and 2011. New upgraded positions were created for the Heads of Campus and the position of Associate Head of campus was created at sites. The Associate Head of campus position will be reviewed during 2012.

A culture of Critical reflection is evident in the review of activities by staff each week.

GOALS FOR THE 2012 YEAR

We have emphasis on successful partnerships with existing Stakeholders to continuing throughout the school year 2012.

To kick start new programs through VET, eg. Developing specific training and course for follow students on Term 3 and Term 4 2012.

Physical Education

Health Well Being

A sustainable enrolment growth.

Recruitment of suitable staff to meet the enrolment growth.

2011 MILESTONES

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

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 2011 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

Thelma Parker
Head of Campus
Mount Isa Flexible Learning Centre



Tim Young
Principal
Flexible Learning Centre Network