



**Townsville  
Flexible Learning Centre**  
22-26 Ingham Road West End 4810

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011**

This annual report for 2011 is published to provide information about the Townsville 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**

The Townsville Flexible Learning Centre, founded in 2006, is a coeducational Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition. It draws strength from more than 200 years of educational mission of the Christian Brothers nourished by the Charism of Edmund Rice. It is part of a national association of forty schools which, in 2011, included six Flexible Learning Centres and attached outreach programs operating across thirteen sites in Queensland.

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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>

The Townsville 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. Attached to The Townsville Flexible Learning Centre is a mobile outreach service, called "It's Up 2 U", which operates in The Upper Ross.

The philosophy of the Townsville 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 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 Townsville 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”

The Townsville 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 the Townsville 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.

The Townsville 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.

Each young person has a Pastoral Care team. In the *It's Up 2 U* Outreach program, this team is made up of the teacher, and youth worker. At the Centre this team comprises their classroom teacher for core literacy/numeracy and at least one other significant worker. Each young person and staff member participates in a community group. The role of the staff members 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 our young

- people e.g. CYMHS, Dept of Communities, Youth Justice etc
- Supporting and mentoring young people who live independently
  - Helping young people 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 Youth Support Coordinator and access to the Network Child Protection Officer as required.

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

<b>Year Level</b>	<b>Students</b>
<b>8</b>	5
<b>9</b>	17
<b>10</b>	31
<b>11</b>	20
<b>12</b>	25
<b>Total</b>	98

## **CURRICULUM**

The aim of the Townsville Flexible Learning Centre is to respond to the complex needs of disenfranchised 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 Townsville 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.

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Subjects offered at various year levels include:

	<b>CORE</b>	<b>ELECTIVE</b>
<b>Year 8 - 10</b>	English Maths Information Communication Technology Sport and Recreation	Cultural Studies Science Media Studies Art Manual Arts Music Outdoor Education

	<b>Authority Registered Subjects</b>	<b>ELECTIVE</b>
<b>Years 11 - 12</b>	English Communication Prevocational Maths Social and Community Studies Recreation Studies	Cultural Studies Science Media Studies Art Manual Arts Music Outdoor Education Work Education Information Technology

## **OUTCOMES**

### **APPARENT STUDENT RETENTION RATE**

<b>Senior cohort Year</b>	<b>Year 8 Base</b>	<b>Year 12 at exit</b>	<b>Retention Rate %</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>333%</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>625%</b>

## ATTENDANCE RATE

The average student attendance rate for 2011 was 73%. This number excludes students who terminated enrolment during the year or who were absent for extended explained absences.

<b>Outcomes for Year 12 Students</b>	
<b>Total number of Senior Certificates awarded</b>	
<b>Percentage of Overall Position (OP) – eligible students with OP 1 – 15</b>	0%
<b>Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates and awarded a Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification</b>	0%
<b>Percentage of students awarded Senior Certificates with OP – eligibility or awarded a Vet qualification</b>	0%
<b>Percentage of Queensland tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving an offer.</b>	0%
<b>The median score for OP - eligible students</b>	NA

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT PRODUCE IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

In 2011, the following programs achieved improved outcomes for students at the Centre.

- Cultural Centre
- The Museum of Tropical Queensland
- Reef HQ
- Thuringowa and Townsville Public libraries
- James Cook University – Science Program
- 'Get Set For Work' Program
- Various work placement venues
- NAIDOC Week
- Sorry Day
- Youth Health Week
- Adopt-a-Cowboy
- Transport Program
- Nutrition Program
- Townsville Catholic Diocese Indigenous Sports Academy
- Flexible Learning Improvement Program
- Outdoor Education Program
- Music Program

## 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)	0	0
VET total ( Cert IV+ III, I-II, apprenticeship, traineeship)	3	12%
Working full-time	1	4%
Working part-time/casual	4	16%
Seeking work	2	8%
Not studying or in the labour force	2	8%
Returned to school	3	12%
Unknown	10	40%

## 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	Service
Indigenous culture Workshops	Outdoor Education Program	Outdoor Education Program	Police Citizen's Youth Club
Elders visits	Ice Skating	Indigenous culture Workshops	Sorry Day
Art	Ten Pin Bowling	Reef HQ	NAIDOC Week
Photography/video, media workshops	Interschool Touch Football matches	Woodwork program	Woodwork program
Sorry Day	Basketball		

NAIDOC Week	Healthy recreation program		
Vibe Alive Program	Gym/general fitness		

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES 2011

The Townsville 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:

- New Staff Days (4 Teachers)
- Whole Staff Days (7 Teachers)
- Remote area first aid (1 Teacher)
- Managing Challenging Behaviours (2 Teachers)
- Barista Course (2 Teachers)
- Operational Planning (7 Teachers)
- Reflective Practice (7 Teachers)
- Program Development and Facilitation (2 Teachers)
- Driving The Outlook (1 Teacher)
- Certificate IV in Youth Work (1 Teacher)
- Break Every Yoke (1 Teacher)
- Trauma and Attachment (2 Teachers)

Expenditure for Staff professional Development in 2011 was \$20,940. The average amount spent per teacher in 2011 on professional learning was \$2,991.

## THE SOCIAL CLIMATE OF THE CENTRE

The social climate of the Townsville Flexible Learning Centre is one of compassion and care expressed through the four principles of Honesty, Respect, Safe and Legal and Participation. These principles form the basis of all activities for staff and young people. A sense of common ground being shared by all at the Centre ensures that a positive, interactive and challenging environment exists. A sense of belonging and ownership has developed in both young people and staff since the Centre opened in 2006.

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

The Townsville Flexible Learning Centre is very aware that a positive relationship with parents and carers that involves them in their child's learning will enhance the community. Parents and carers are welcome to attend the Flexible Learning Centre to take part in any of the daily activities at any time. Parents, Carers, Guardians and Support Workers are encouraged to be an active part of any organised Centre activities. In 2011 these included NAIDOC Week activities, National Sorry Day, Health Week, Work Experience, Sports Academy, Indigenous Heritage Project, Building Project Openings, Family BBQs and Parent Reporting Days. Each term a family event is held to encourage parents, carers, support workers and families to form a relationship with the school and participate in their child's education.

## **STAFF**

The staff of the Townsville 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>	7
<b>Total number of Support staff</b>	8.5
<b>Total Number of Staff</b>	15.5

<b>Teaching Staff Qualifications</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Diploma</b>	1
<b>Degree</b>	7
<b>Post Graduate Diploma</b>	
<b>Masters Degree</b>	1
<b>Doctorate</b>	

The average attendance rate for teachers in the 2011 academic year was 92%. 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 teaching staff retention rate expressed as a percentage is 71%. This indicates the percentage of teachers who have continued service at the school from 2010 into 2011.

## **INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

In recent times, substantial change has occurred in the provision of computer hardware and software for young people and staff. Professional development continues to



enhance the skills of staff in this important facet of learning. Information management has become a critical literacy. Integration of technology within all learning continues to evolve across the variety the school's subject offerings. The centre currently has two computer labs, a music technology area and a class set of laptops. These resources greatly assist in the engagement of young people.

## **FUNDING SOURCES**

School income broken down by funding source is available in the "My School Website" visit <http://www.myschool.edu.au> .

## **SCHOOL REVIEW**

The Flexible Learning Centre network reviewed its leadership structure across 2010 and 2011. New 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.

In 2011 the Townsville Flexible Learning Centre participated in the five year Cyclical Review conducted by the NonState Schools Accreditation Board receiving registration for a further five years.

## **PROGRESS TOWARDS GOALS FOR THE 2011 YEAR**

The Edmund Rice Education Flexible Learning Network Board and Leadership recognize the value of strategic planning for the long term, sustainable development of programs, capital and human resources, the minimization 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 2011 articulated in the 2010 Annual Report.

- The centre was successful in obtaining a 9kw solar electricity system
- In partnership with the Northern outlook a outdoor education program was developed and includes the development of staff
- Community partnerships strengthen with Breakthru, Instep, Dance North and the Northern Outlook
- New facilities, such as the music lab, are being integrated into the school day
- There is a strong community based on the four principles at the centre
- Attendance rate increased as more young people choose to attend

## **GOALS FOR THE 2012 YEAR**

- Continue a culture of environmental sustainability within the centre
- Continue to develop the outdoor education program and embed within the culture of the centre
- Incorporate new facilities into the culture of the centre
- Re-evaluate the curriculum and learning choices including the reporting system
- Continue to strengthen partnerships with community organisations
- Continue to develop a sense of community based on the four principles
- Refine the developmental literacy and numeracy program
- Provide an environment where young people feel empowered to take control of their lives and their learning.
- Empower staff and young people to work together and share common ground.
- Further utilise the information and technologies resources of the centre

## **2011 MILESTONES**

2011 saw the beginning of the Special Assistance Schools Building Program. The building program greatly increased the Centre's capacity to engage with young people. Most notably additions to the centre this year are a science/multipurpose area, a covered meeting area (the central hub for the school community) and the completion of a covered sport and recreation area. The centre was a building site for much of the year with young people and staff working together to minimise the impact on the school community.

This year partnerships with community agencies included Mundingburra Rotary, Breakthru employment solutions, James Cook University, the Townsville Diocese of the Catholic Education Office, Headspace, Dance North, Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service and the Northern Outlook.

These relationships allowed the Centre to facilitate and participate in a number of programs that had a significant impact for our young people. Notable inclusions this year were the Small Dancers – Big Stories partnership with Dance North and the Outdoor Education Program with the Northern Outlook. The Small Dancers – Big Stories project engaged 5 young people in a week long mentoring program which concluded with a solo performance by each of the young people enjoyed by the school community. The Outdoor Education Program provided 3 week long Sea Kayak Journeys and a young men's and young women's camp. Both partnerships provided an opportunity for personal growth and reflection in a safe yet challenging way.

Culturally significant events included hosting a NAIDOC celebration, participating in a Sorry Day function, marching for Mabo day, and representation at ANZAC and Remembrance Day activities.

The most significant milestone for the Flexible Learning Centre will always be providing a safe, caring, and educational environment for young people who for a variety of complex and sometimes challenging reasons sit outside the mainstream education environment.

Todd Alloway  
Head of Campus  
Townsville Flexible Learning Centre

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Young', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Young  
Principal  
Flexible Learning Centre Network