

ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE SCHOOL
COMMUNITY

2021



**ST FRANCIS FLEXIBLE LEARNING CENTRE,
CHIGWELL, TASMANIA**



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION
AUSTRALIA**

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Our College Vision

VISION

Empowering young people to flourish through holistic education within a grounded, innovative and relationship-based learning community.

MISSION

We offer life changing education and wellbeing support for young people who have made a choice to engage in an inclusive, diverse and safe learning environment.

Principal Report

St. Francis Flexible Learning Centre is a wonderful community that is in Chigwell, Hobart. Our young people make the choice to engage in a dynamic and individualised learning environment and they travel far and wide to ensure that they are working towards their future goals. We feel very fortunate to welcome young people from Bridgewater to New Norfolk, Claremont, Huonville and many other places!

Everyone in our communities operate with a set of four Principles; Respect, Safe and legal, Honesty and Participation. The Principles help us to ensure that our communities are safe, diverse and inclusive.

Young people that make the choice to engage in our learning environments are choosing to engage in a program that focuses on them as an individual and that holds them in unconditional positive regard. We acknowledge that education is the right of every young person and we feel incredibly privileged to walk alongside each of our young people as they develop as young adults and flourish through our holistic learning environment.

The Covid pandemic has certainly had a significant impact on all of us and it has meant time off school and restricted engagement and access to our learning community for some during the 2021 school year.

Whilst this has been a challenging time, I have nothing but admiration for every member of our schools. The way that our communities have come together to support each other, to show care and unity, to ensure that we offer relationships that are built on unconditional positive regard for our young people has been incredibly humbling.

I acknowledge the privilege and immense responsibility of continuing to hold high expectations of our young people and to support them to progress their learning journey during these unprecedented times. I express my admiration to all our young people for showing grit, stamina, vulnerability and bravery during this year and for continuing to progress through learning.

Despite the challenges that we faced during this time we were able to maintain commitment to our strategic intentions. We have been able to progress the Senior Certificate for our young people, have worked on significant projects that include a review of our IT systems, a focus on our professional learning program for staff (particularly as it relates to our practice framework) and a continued focus on staff wellbeing. This year we worked on the redevelopment of our new site which we aim to move into during term two of 2022.

I thank you all for continuing to *participate* in our communities, I *respect* your courage in maintaining your connection to us and your learning during a very challenging time, I am grateful for all of the *honesty* along the journey and we always welcome feedback and want to know how we can improve what we offer to young people. I am thankful that our communities remain *safe and legal* and I hope that every person connected to our community knows that we committed to their safety, inclusivity and diversity and that we are a **Child Safe School**.

College Overview

The EREA St Francis Flexible Learning Centre (FLC) is a co-educational Catholic Specialist Secondary School in Tasmania.

St Francis FLC operates within the policy and compliance framework of Catholic Education Tasmania (CET), the Department of Education and Training (DET) and Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), a national association that owns and governs EREA schools, that includes Flexible Learning Centres. St Francis FLC commenced operation as a registered school in 2016 and has grown to meet the needs of young people from around Hobart aged 12-18 years of age.

The philosophy of St Francis FLC draws on the spirit and vision of Edmund Rice, EREA, the Touchstones and Flexible Learning practice/s of The Principles of Operation and the Nano Nagle Network' Guiding Principles of Rock over Water. 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 among all community members. These principles are Respect, Safe and Legal, Participation and Honesty. In essence, the principles establish common ground among staff members, young people, parents, guardians and carers. These shared principles provide a means to resolve conflict, negotiate learning, recognise rights, model and explore responsibilities and consequences, both within the group, individually, and as members of the broader community.

St Francis FLC offers an inclusive and non-discriminating learning community to young people, who for a variety of reasons, are disconnected from mainstream education. Young people who enrol at the St Francis FLC come from a variety of language, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds.

At St Francis FLC, young people are exposed to learning experiences that develop understanding and appreciation of the diverse cultural values that constitute Australian society. Learning experiences also build self-confidence and esteem in students, promote an optimistic view of their potential and future, and assist them to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enjoy a healthy and fulfilling life. In conjunction with their teachers and wellbeing workers, guardians and families, young people draft personal learning plans with articulated educational adjustments and pathways, thus meeting their individual needs within a diverse and inclusive learning community. St Francis FLC offers the Australian School Curriculum and has recently broadened to include senior years VET programs, as per guidance CET and DET.

Our relationship-based practice is grounded in unconditional positive regard for our young people. The use of a process called 'collaborative problem solving' assists young people and staff to build the capacity to self-regulate behaviour, improve learning outcomes, and nurture relationships. A key strategy for ensuring successful outcomes for young people is the provision of a teacher and a youth worker in each classroom. This partnership approach ensures that learning goals can be set for both curriculum and wellbeing.

The St Francis FLC curriculum aims to be appropriate to the needs of young people. Social emotional learning is a major component of this. Our approach to addressing the wellbeing needs of young people is both multi-faceted and multi-dimensional, and involves an integration of learning and wellbeing, through the development and implementation of internal and external partnerships focussed on improving a young person's learning and wellbeing.

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The primary Learning and Teaching focuses at St Francis FLC in 2021 were:

- Continued engagement and participation in a meaningful education, whilst a global pandemic affected all school communities
- improved literacy and numeracy outcomes for all young people; and
- consistent trauma informed pedagogical practices to ensure that the learning environment is safe, predictable, and optimal for learning.
- Implementation of the Nano Nagle Network's 'Curriculum Guiding Principles' outlining the foundation narratives and core practices that underpin our pedagogical approaches and rationale for our programs

Our programs are routinely reviewed to ensure the best learning opportunities for each student in our care. In the year levels seven to ten, an integrated learning approach is applied and utilises the capabilities and five key domains from the Australian Curriculum: English, Mathematics, Technologies; The Arts; and Health and Physical Education.

The implementation of the senior secondary program provides young people with the opportunity to begin post-school pathways, such as VET and the transition of young people beyond school into their next steps remained an integral and shared focus.

Achievements

The key achievements in relation to these goals include:

- Implementation of diagnostic assessments
 - o Literacy – Progress Achievement Tests (PAT) Reading
 - o Numeracy – Math Pathways
- Clear referral processes for further targeted assessment and intervention based on data
- Embedding the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) across all programs
- Professional learning to improve setting achievement goals for young people
- Staff and YP supported to engage in blended learning opportunities
- Participation in the YEET data collection and 'tracking' of YP pathways

SFFLC will continue to expand VET choices on offer within the senior secondary program including the exciting new TCE – Tasmanian Certificate of Education.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The measurement of student learning progress is a key focus of ensuring our learning programs are targeted for each individual student.

We aim to measure various aspects of each young person's learning experience while considering the learning differences of all. We intentionally set about to provide every young person with the best opportunities for success.

The use of diagnostic assessments such as PAT Reading and Maths Pathways is increasingly being utilised to inform teaching and learning practices.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Student wellbeing remains at the forefront of the St Francis FLC school identity. Enacting a trauma informed practice approach in our work and support of young people, St Francis FLC continues to educate young people and equip them with the skills and knowledge for them to prosper into adulthood.

In 2021 student wellbeing initiatives included:

- SFFLC provided opportunities for young people to engage in a range of activities, including Out and Abouts - Excursion, VETcursions and Incursions
- Our Student Representative Council regularly met, enabling young people opportunities to have voice in our school community.
- Our Inclusivity Group has regular meetings and includes a focus on providing a safe and supporting setting for all YP and community, including LGBTQI+ and Aboriginal and Torres Strait People's
- SFFLC maintained the Art program, which culminated in an art exhibition of young people's work at a local art gallery. Young people accessed the art space with their class group, and on occasions for individual sessions this was regarded as a place of creativity and safety
- Young people have continued to use the dedicated Sensory Space onsite, especially when feeling, overwhelmed, anxious or needing a break
- Targeted wellbeing sessions in the classroom and whole school focus to help our young people understand and communicate how they are feeling and develop strategies to support with their emotional regulation.
- Each term a Newsletter was produced showcasing the wonderful work and experiences of the young people in their classes and community
- The Gala End of Year Celebration provided an opportunity for our whole school community to come together and share celebrations of the year past

Achievements

Some key achievements in the area of student wellbeing were:

- Collaborative Problem Solving processes enabled young people to actively participate and work through challenges in a safe, respectful and productive way.
- Flexibility and creative learning opportunities through online and offsite learning, when/where needed to maintain connection and support for young people during COVID
- Young people were supported to obtain their learner licence through an initiative that took place onsite
- Young people supported to obtain important documentation such as birth certificates and vaccination status
- St Francis FLC developed new partnerships with key organisations in the community so our young people can easily access external services.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

St Francis' FLC is focused on building relationships with young people so that they feel welcome when coming to school. Staff ensure they meet with young people to create Personal Learning Plans and Safety Plans, so they understand the wants and needs of young people. Staff also actively review Personal Learning Plans and Safety Plans with young people, guardians and families.

Although no formal survey of student satisfaction has taken place at St Francis' FLC students and staff often have open discussions about learning, wellbeing and interests. This open communication allows staff to meet the needs of our young people ensuring that they are getting satisfaction from learning and engagement at school. Young people are invited to provide feedback and input on a daily/weekly basis, their voice is important.

SFFLC has a twice weekly, whole school community meeting where young people are invited share their voice on what was working well, what they felt challenged by and suggestions they felt would enhance the school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

St Francis FLC provides a number of adjustments to support all young people to attend on a regular basis, these include:

- transport support to travel to and from school
- provision of meals and clothing as necessary
- development of Personal Learning Plans for every young person to ensure that the learning program is personally meaningful and engaging
- Weekly review of attendance data to ensure young people get an outreach session if there is a drop in attendance drops.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for ensuring that they notify the school to explain the absence of their young person on any particular school day. Notification may be provided to the school face-to-face, or via email, phone call or text message.

If the young person is expected to attend school on a given day and does not arrive by the commencement of the school day, or does not access transport support as arranged, there is a daily automated text message to notify guardians that their young person is not at school. If no response is received the young person's classroom staff members will contact the young person and their carer as soon as is practical in order to seek an explanation for the absence.

If the staffing partnership is not able to reach a young person on their guardian in relation to an absence, they will speak with school leaders to determine what further action should be taken. Reasonable efforts are made to ensure that the young person is safe. This may include contacting alternate carers or services (where consent has been previously given to do so). Follow up may also include contacting the Department of Health and Human Services or the Police where the Principal deems that the young person may be at risk of harm.

Years 9-12 Student Retention Rate

Years 9-12 Student Retention Rate 78.76%

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level

Y07 28.11%

Y08 36.07%

Y09 37.09%

Y10 38.28%

Overall average attendance 35.95%

Post-School Destinations as at 2021

Tertiary Study	0%
TAFE/VET	0%
Appreticeship/Traineeship	4.65%
Deferred	0%
Employment	4.65%
Other – the category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	90.70%

Child Safe Standards

Goals and Intended Outcomes

Child Safeguarding continues to be at the forefront of St Francis FLC operations and ensuring adherence to the EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework and the TCEC Child Safe Standards. St Francis has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of abuse.

Supported by our online policy portal, Policy Plus, St Francis has continued to review and refine the work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a child safe environment and to consolidate an organisational culture of child safety within our community.

Child safety training for staff has been revised to include testing on more 'real life' scenarios as part of the training program to support staff understanding, and adherence to, not only the Child Safety Program, but also the Student Duty of Care Policy.

Achievements

Major achievements in relation to child safeguarding at St Francis FLC include:

- Child safety induction for new staff, as well as ongoing child safety training for all staff, including mandatory Child Safety training;
- Consolidation of working relationships with SFSK ARL and DoE to further improve support provided to all young people, including those in Out of Home Care, and;
- Data from child safety reports, PLP's and Rubrics, used to influence wellbeing programs being delivered in classrooms and whole school intentional planning and program delivery.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

As we approach the culmination of 2020-2023 Strategic Plan the leadership team will be working to action our top priorities including;

1. Staff and young people participate in a safe and inclusive learning environment that is trauma informed, democratic, inclusive, relational, and operates through the Four Principles of; Respect, Participation, Honesty, and Safe & Legal to establish Common Ground.
2. Young people's learning journey will be supported, enriched and captured through consistent meaningful and purposeful teaching and learning strategies.
3. Young people benefit from individual holistic wellbeing support to enable their engagement in learning and assist their opportunities for a successful future.
4. Effective organisational, administrative and evaluation systems and processes support staff to do their jobs, young people to learn and flourish, and meet all requirements of the systems in which we work.
5. Our work is guided by our Foundation Statement, our Curriculum Guiding Principles, 'Water over Rocks' and the Charter for Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and is faithful to a vision of education inspired by the Gospel. Our inclusive identity is enhanced by the fact that we are a national organisation that is leading in the field of flexible education.
6. Settling into our new site in Springfield Gardens and continuing to develop a safe and welcoming education community

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2021**

TAE
 Proteus
 Berry Street Education
 Child Safeguarding
 Mental Health 1st Aid
 1st Aid
 Fire Warden Training
 Medium Rigid Vehicle Licencing
 Cultural Training

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL in 2021**9****AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL****\$3000****TEACHER SATISFACTION**

During 2021 SFFLC experienced significant staff shortages but have since recruited and maintained staff who are passionate, dedicated and bring energy and consistency to the team.

2021 continued to be a year in which SFFLC community faced the COVID pandemic and associated impacts and challenges, but staff embraced the challenge and change and worked together to support the young people and each other and develop engaging outreach lessons and learning packs to maintain engagement and support young people with their learning.

Although there has been no formalised survey of staff, the Network Team facilitated a TOP Day which allowed an opportunity for staff to openly celebrate positives, share frustrations and put forward suggestions to promote and contribute to a positive school culture.

Staff say they enjoy working at SFFLC and would recommend it to other teachers or support staff and feel that working at SFFLC has contributed to their professional development

Future Directions

St. Francis Flexible Learning Centre looks forward in 2022 to continued work on current strategic plan, including settling into and promoting the new school site, which will provide more opportunities and resources for young people, including forming positive relationships with the wider community. We will continue to build a strong, safe and healthy school environment, welcoming families and young people to share their learning journey.

School Performance Data Summary

Note: The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at www.acnc.gov.au