



Together we care and grow

YOUTH & COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE

PRINCIPLES and STATEMENT of UNDERSTANDING for ENROLMENT in 2017 Revised March, 2017

Youth & Community Learning Centre

The Youth & Community Learning Centre [YCLC] is situated at 63 Ruthven Street, Toowoomba. YCLC provides a learning experience for young people who are seeking an alternative to mainstream schooling. The centre was established by the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba in 2000 and remains affiliated with, and supported by, the diocese. The centre is in the buildings originally used as the Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School started by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan.

Curriculum

The centre is an accredited, ungraded secondary school which caters for young people aged 13-18 years at enrolment.

The curriculum is categorised into two key areas:

Literacy & Numeracy: Young people will be enrolled in Certificate courses I and/or II in the areas Literacy and Numeracy; these focus on functional skills in these subjects. These courses will be taught by staff at the centre and assessed by staff of registered training organisations.

Certificate Courses

Young people will be enrolled in one of the following three courses:

- Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways;
- Certificate II in Automotive; or
- A Certificate II in Music through the Queensland College of Music.

These courses will be taught by staff at the centre and assessed by staff of registered training organisations.

In addition, the centre offers the following:

Rock and Water

All young people will take part in three Rock and Water sessions each week. Rock and Water is a psycho-physical teaching program developed by Dutch educator and author Freerk Ykema for young people. The program aims assist young people in their development to adulthood by increasing their self-realisation, self-confidence, self-respect, boundary awareness, self-awareness and intuition. A specific goal for the course is teaching people to deal with power,

strength and powerlessness. All teaching staff at YCLC have been trained to run this program.

Social/Emotional

Apart from the Rock and Water program this includes the Love Bites program, emotional regulation sessions, developing a deeper understanding of self and self-compassion, facing challenges, trying new things, dealing with stress and frustrating situations and expressing oneself in a positive way, being prepared to step outside one's comfort area and have a go at new situations.

Life Skills

Includes activities to assist young people in the areas of goal setting, planning for the future, cooking, kitchen operations, budgeting, doing a Careers Interest test, updating their resume, application letter writing [if applicable], learning to deal with government and community organisations, obtaining a driver's licence learners' permit, booking appointments and sexual health discussions.

Sport

On Tuesday afternoons young people take part in *Community Youth Games*; a sports/activity program run by Toowoomba Youth Service.

Enrichment

At some times during the year there may be sessions or short courses offered in the areas of art, music, woodwork, food technology, gardening and ICT.

Young people enrolled at YCLC are required to prepare for, and sit, the NAPLAN tests in Year 9: i.e. normally the year in which they turn 14.

Curriculum Process

The curriculum process begins at the enrolment meeting and includes the clarification of student context [why is the young person seeking enrolment at YCLC] and the discussion of individual needs and goals for the young person.

At YCLC a young person participates in Literacy and Numeracy diagnostic tests and completes a careers interest test. The staff then discuss and start the young person's Personalised Learning Plan [PLP]. At the end of the young person's probation period [normally a month] the caregiver/s meet with staff to discuss, complete and sign the PLP with the young person. It is at this meeting that the young person's goals [academic and social] are formalised for the following semester. The centre offers a modified curriculum and thus only reports on the young person's PLP goals in their end-of-semester reports.

Timetable

The academic day begins at 9.50 am and finishes at 2.00 pm.

The first Monday of each fortnight is a staff meeting and planning day and young people are not required at the centre; however, young people attending SQIT, doing work experience or involved in School Based Apprenticeships [SBAs] are still be required to do so on that day if it is on their timetable.

Several Fridays throughout the year are Activity Days and the finishing time will vary depending on the activity for that day. Participation on Activity Days is based on attendance and satisfactory behaviour and completion of all work in the previous weeks.

Upon enrolment some young people may be placed on a reduced timetable for a probationary period. Otherwise all young people must attend every day.

Student Protection

Under relevant legislation, should YCLC staff become aware that a young person has been sexually abused, is likely to be sexually abused, has been harmed or is at risk of significant harm, then staff members have a legal and moral obligation to report this to the appropriate authorities.

The YCLC Student Protection Contacts for 2016 are David Trenaman and Jacinta Jensen. If a parent/caregiver has any queries or concerns about student protection, they should not hesitate to contact either of the Child Protection contacts or the principal.

Health and the Young Person

YCLC works in partnership with the Goolburri Medical Centre and there is a visiting doctor each second Wednesday. Young people are able to discuss any medical concerns they may have. If further appointments at the medical centre are required, Goolburri will arrange for family contact and transport where needed.

In the event of an emergency YCLC staff will call an ambulance and inform the young person's caregiver as soon as possible.

The North Dental service provides all basic dental care to the young people while they are enrolled at YCLC; this is a free service to our young people. The young people will have transport provided to use this service one or two times per year. The dental service will provide basic check-up and teeth cleaning services. If the young person needs further treatment a form will be sent home requesting permission to provide further services. Hearing and eye sight testing can also be arranged. These appointments will be arranged only if the young person, parent or staff identify possible problems.

If requested, staff at the centre will provide support to young people wishing to stop smoking

If caregivers have any further medical concerns they should not hesitate to contact staff to discuss other possible assistance the centre may be able to offer.

Centrelink & Abstudy

It is the responsibility of the caregiver to inform the appropriate authorities [e.g. Centrelink, Abstudy] of any changes in school enrolment.

Centrelink frequently requests information from the centre regarding young people's attendance and we are legally required to provide this information.

YCLC Principles of Behaviour

At YCLC there are principles of behaviour by which young people are expected to abide. These apply at all times when associated with the centre [i.e. on excursions].

Being respectful: i.e. respect for oneself, other young people at the centre, the centre and its staff; being aware that people have the right to live, to learn and to work harmoniously with others at all times; realising that people have a right to feel safe and not to be bullied by others; working together; being patient; treating others as they would like to be treated.

Having a go: i.e. being willing to participate in all sessions and activities at and outside the centre including kitchen duty, cleaning around the centre and sport; trying one's best; motivating one's fellow young people.

Being Fair Dinkum: i.e. being honest, admitting mistakes, talking to staff if there are issues at home; telling appropriate people the truth; being on task; listening to other options.

Being safe and legal: i.e. coming to the centre fit and ready for sessions, dressing appropriately for activities, following the laws of the country; displaying appropriate physical contact; maintaining a tidy YCLC environment; using equipment properly.

YCLC is a non-smoking environment and this non-smoking rule also applies during excursions. If a young person is discovered smoking they will be informed that they will not be picked by the bus for the following five school days. If the young person wishes to return to the centre after this period, they must contact the centre and they will be permitted to attend after this time. There will be no need for a re-enrolment interview at that time.

Unfortunately, there are a few occasions when young people choose not to abide by these principles.

If the issue is minor then the young person will be warned and told not to offend again. If the young person continues displaying unsatisfactory behaviour then he/she will be referred to the Centre's principal.

If a young person fails to respond to intervention by the principal, counsellor and/or staff and continues to display inappropriate behaviour or is involved in a one-off serious issue; the young person will be taken home and the young person's caregiver is contacted to ensure they are aware that the young person is being brought home. In the following days the young person may return to the centre to resolve the issue with the requirement of a *re-entry interview*.

If a young person persistently continues to display inappropriate and/or disruptive behaviour, then it will be assumed that the young person no longer wishes to be enrolled at the centre.

Resolution

The focus of reaching a resolution is to:

- establish that the young person involved is aware of her/his inappropriate behaviour;
- resolve problems in a way that respects individuals and attempts to meet the needs of all concerned; and
- establish processes and behaviours to ensure that such inappropriate behaviour will not re-occur.

The staff involved in reaching a resolution are committed to:

- listening with an open mind and seeking to understand perspectives;
- treating each person respectfully and fairly;
- communicating clearly, sensitively and objectively;
- always naming behaviours whilst not labelling young people or staff; and
- where necessary, establishing timelines for action and the review of resolutions.

If a young person decides to leave the centre [including off-campus activities] without permission, then it will be necessary for the young person to arrange a re-entry meeting with the staff at the centre to resolve the issue. At this meeting the young person's

parent/caregiver will be required to be present. At the time the young person leaves the centre their caregiver will be contacted.

Excursions

YCLC uses the community as a classroom on many occasions. We presume that caregivers understand this and give permission for young people to be transported in YCLC vehicles to community venues within the Toowoomba area as needs arise. Venues that fall under this generic permission include, but are not limited to Toowoomba parks and gardens, Spencer Street Indoor Sports Centre, Milne Bay Aquatic Centre Sunset Superbowl, Highfields Indoor Sports and Swimming Centre, Toowoomba shopping centres and businesses, SQIT [Southern Queensland Institute of TAFE], USQ [University of Southern Queensland], Catholic schools in the Toowoomba area, the Toowoomba Catholic Education Offices [Margaret St, Charnley St and Lawrence S], Cobb and Co. Museum, the Gummingurru stone arrangement site and Amaroo Environmental Education Centre.

For excursions to Brisbane and outside the Toowoomba area, a separate permission form will be sent home for signing. Some community groups/workplaces may have their own permission forms that will also require signing.

Young people should realise that their attendance on any excursion is dependent on their positive behaviour and attendance at the centre and during the excursion. Poor or disruptive behaviour on an excursion will restrict their opportunity to go on further excursions.

Community Youth Games and Other Sporting Activities

Some young people do not wish to participate in physical activities [e.g. Community Youth Games] run by the centre or other agencies. If a young person refuses to take part then:

- the first time it happens the young person will be warned and the parent/caregiver will be notified of the incident;
- the second time this occurs the young person will be suspended from the centre till a face-to-face interview is organised with the young person and the parent. The young person will not return to the centre until the young person agrees to take part in all activities.

It must be noted that refusing to take part in any activities will impact on the young person's enrolment at the centre.

Transport

The centre picks up young people from their designated address in Toowoomba each morning for sessions at the centre and drops them off at the same address in the afternoons. If caregivers wish to nominate another permanent drop-off place for their child [e.g. the home of a relative or friend] then caregivers must let the centre know of the address by using the form in the enrolment package. Young people will only be dropped off at nominated addresses. The centre needs to be kept aware of any changes of residential address.

If there is to be a one-off change to the young person's drop-off point in the afternoon the centre needs to be informed by either a note on that morning or a phone call to the centre before 1.00 pm that day.

Pick up and drop off is a service the centre provides and if this service is abused [e.g. cutting a seat belt] then young people will be required to organise their own transport.

Sometimes we are asked to drop somebody off while on the bus run. We can transport the parent or caregiver of a young person provided that young person is also on the vehicle and there is seat available. We are not able to transport anyone else. This does not apply when relatives are being picked up for, or being taken home from, functions interviews or meetings at the centre.

On occasions it may be necessary for a young person to be transported in a CEO vehicle; e.g. for medical appointments. The centre may take young people to and from SQIT courses, SBA and work experience.

We presume that caregivers give permission for young people to be transported in YCLC vehicles each day. YCLC staff members do not transport young people in their own vehicles. In the event of an emergency 000 will be contacted and appropriate support will be engaged.

The centre appreciates being informed in advance that a young person is not coming to the centre as this can considerably reduce the time needed for the bus runs. The centre should be contacted before 8.00 am in relation to absenteeism or changes to the pick-up location. It is a legal requirement that this notification be made by the parent/caregiver by note or phone. Unfortunately, we cannot legally accept notification by a young person, unless they are identified by the government as independent of a parent or caregiver. If the centre has not been contacted, an SMS will be sent to the parent/caregiver reminding them to contact the centre regarding the absence. If there is no response, the young person's absence will be marked as unexplained.

However, many times we go to houses, the young person does not come out to the bus and nobody informs the centre that the young person is not coming or the reason for their absence. If a young person is not there for pick-up three times in a row and we receive no message then we will stop coming and the young person will be deemed to have disengaged with the centre. The centre must be contacted before pick-ups will re-commence. If we do not hear anything for two weeks then we will take the young person off the roll.

Young people will also be taken off the roll if they disengage twice from the centre within one term. In both situations, it will be necessary for a re-entry meeting with the young person and their caregiver if the young person wishes to return to the centre. Please be aware that if there is a current waiting list the young person's place will be given to someone who wishes to consistently attend the centre.

Success at YCLC is not possible unless the young person attends regularly and it must be the aim of all young people to attend every day.

Appropriate Dress

There is no formal uniform at YCLC although, for safety reasons, young people are required to wear closed-in shoes at all times. Young people should remember that they are attending a school and dress appropriately: e.g. short shorts and/or skirts/dresses, revealing clothing and singlets are not permitted.

Young people must purchase a YCLC polo shirt on enrolment and must purchase another if their first shirt is lost, too old or too small. This polo shirt must be worn on Tuesdays for sport, some activities off-campus and on all excursions. The cost of this polo shirt is \$15.00 for young people.

Young people are also required to wear particular clothing for special occasions. YCLC is willing to assist with the purchase these for the young person.

Also as a safety issue we must have young people clearly identified on excursions as being with YCLC. They cannot wear a YCLC polo shirt under another jumper or jacket to keep warm as then the YCLC shirt cannot be seen. When a young person is on an excursion or at sport they have three options:

- wear only the YCLC polo shirt [which could get very cold in winter];
- wear a YCLC hoodie with a YCLC polo shirt underneath; or
- wear a YCLC jacket with a YCLC polo shirt underneath.

The centre has subsidised the cost of the jackets and hoodies; hoodies with the embroidered YCLC logo are \$40.00 and jackets with embroidered YCLC logo are \$50.00. For personal safety, names cannot be embroidered on school polo shirts, hoodies or jackets.

Caregiver's Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of caregivers to ensure that:

- they support young people to consistently attend the centre, courses and work experience;
- young people are ready on time for pick up at the designated address each morning;
- young people are in a fit state for sessions at the centre and are dressed appropriately;
- they inform the centre prior to pick-up if the young person is sick or otherwise unable to attend sessions; and
- for legal reasons, ensure they keep the centre informed of any changes in address and/or telephone contact numbers.

Please detach and sign this page and return it to the Youth & Community Learning Centre; caregivers should keep pages 1-7 for their own reference.

Principal's Declaration

All YCLC staff have read the revised *Principles and Statement of Understanding for Enrolment in 2017* policy and agree to fulfil their obligations under this policy in 2017.

Signature: _____
[Bill Smith, Principal]

Date: _____

Young person's declaration:

I have read the revised *Principles and Statement of Understanding for Enrolment in 2017* and I agree to fulfil my obligations under this policy in 2017.

Signature: _____
[Young Person]

Date: _____

Parent/Caregiver's declaration:

I have read the revised *Principles and Statement of Understanding for Enrolment in 2017* and I agree to support the young person under my care to ensure that they fulfil their obligations under this policy in 2017.

Signature: _____
[Parent/Caregiver]

Name: _____
[Please clearly print your name]

Date: _____