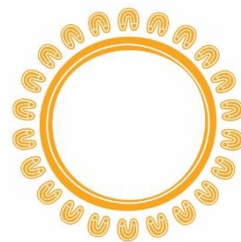


WOLLONGONG FLEXIBLE SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Contact Details

School	Wollongong Flexible School
School Address	Cnr Princes Hwy and Towradgi Rd, Towradgi NSW 2518
Contact Person	Michael Loudoun
Governing Body	Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd. Board
Governing Body Chair	Mr. Peter Pearce
Phone	02 4201 1900
Email	wollongongflc@ereafsn.edu.au
Website	www.flexi.edu.au

This annual report has been reviewed and approved by the EREAFSL Board to ensure compliance with our school registration requirements. This report is published to provide information about Wollongong Flexible School for parents / carers, young people, members of our school community, and other interested parties. This report has been compiled in accordance with the relevant Commonwealth and State Government reporting requirements.

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Message from our Head of Campus

2024 was our 12th year in operation and included a name change from Wollongong Flexible Learning Centre to Wollongong Flexible School. This followed a national move to ensure that our Flexi's are clearly identified as registered schools.

We welcomed 3 new staff members to our team including myself as Head of Campus, Peete came aboard as our new Administrator while we also had Sofie commence as a Youth Worker. Our new staff came with a variety of skills and experiences which have complemented our Flexi community and added to our connections with Young People and the school experience that we provide for them.

Each year, we lose a few of our experienced Young People but the advantage of this is that there are always others who then grow naturally into leaders of our school space, providing support for their peers as well as taking ownership to improve the learning and activity spaces in our school. Student identified highlights of 2024 included our Christmas Lunch, Luna Park outing and the annual Scavenger Hunt.

Demand for enrolment at our Flexi was increasing throughout the year as we see a clear need in the community across all ages and genders. We continue to actively search for a new site that could accommodate larger numbers and deliver us purpose-built spaces with the aim of finding an opportunity that would allow us to expand and further meet the needs of the community.

Engaging with families in a meaningful way was a focus for this year and this resulted in multiple large events that are described further in this report. We continued to see success with numerous Young People completing the Certificate I in Functional Literacy as well as the Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways delivered by our teaching staff.

School Context

Co-educational or single sex	Co-educational
School Sector	Catholic (in the Edmund Rice Tradition)
Year Levels Offered	7-10
Additional Information	Additional information about our school can be found at: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- mySchool website- EREA Flexi website

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Wollongong Flexible School is a part of Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd who provide a second, third or fourth chance to young people who have disengaged from mainstream schools, with a focus on radical inclusion, hope and opportunity. Wollongong Flexible School commenced operation in 2024 as a registered co-educational Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition.

At Flexis, we do things differently. We walk, learn and work together with young people on Common Ground; we build relationships, and every member of the community commits to doing their best to work within our four principles of Respect, Participation, Honesty, and Safe and Legal.

Across our Flexi Schools and Special Education Schools in almost every state and territory in Australia, we support young people with strengths-based, trauma-aware learning. Often young people come to our Flexis thinking they cannot learn – we show them they can. We make sure young people feel safe, welcome and empowered to succeed. We provide young people with the opportunity to define what will work best for them, with services to adapt to their needs.

First Nations influence

Since the very beginning, we have walked in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, advocating for change and promoting reconciliation. At Flexis one third of our young people and 10% of our educators identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

As a priority, we are working to strengthen the cultural capacity of our entire workforce. We are working to make sure the system values and respects First Nations peoples and perspectives, to build Indigenous leadership at every level of our organisation, and to ensure that First Nations young people experience the highest quality education possible in the safest and most dynamic schools in the country.

DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM OFFERINGS

Wollongong Flexible School offers holistic learning experiences that address the social needs of our young people, and promotes their emotional, physical, spiritual, and academic development. Our education programs are attuned to the individual by an assessment of need and delivery within a supportive environment. The purpose of this personalized approach is to engage the young person with their learning and empower them to take responsibility for their actions and learning, achieve greater autonomy and self-reliance and to engage in the transition to further education and/or employment.

We offer Young People the opportunity to engage with Stage 4 and 5 mandatory NESA courses as well as other accredited courses including the Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways and a Certificate I in Functional Literacy.

Cocurricular offerings

Wollongong Flexible School provides extensive opportunities for young people to participate in cocurricular or non-classroom activities at their level and within their areas of interest. The broad range of opportunities or choices for young people includes activities described as cultural, sporting, and intellectual and/or service related.

Cocurricular activities offered at Wollongong Flexible School in 2024:

- A range of sporting options including basketball and futsal at the Snakepit, swimming at local pools and beaches, fishing, bushwalking, volleyball, boxing and aerobic fitness.
- Cultural experiences on and offsite offered through Gumaraa including opportunities to learn about country and undertake weaving and artistic activities.
- Outdoor Education Program with numerous activities held at The Tops Conference Centre including abseiling, karting, team initiative games and giant swing.
- Work experience is encouraged and tailored to individual circumstances.
- A School Holiday program ensures that Young People can remain engaged with our community during breaks.
- Young People are offered a range of music and art activities throughout the year during electives by qualified and experienced staff.
- External training courses are facilitated both on and off site and include barista courses, white card courses, first and CPR training as well as RSA and RCG qualifications.

SCHOOL POLICIES

In accordance with registration requirements, our key school policies are publicly available via our website.

How to access our school policies:

1. Click on the EREA Flexi Schools website link <https://www.flexi.edu.au/>
2. Click on 'Flexi Schools' or 'Special Schools' from the top menu
3. From the school directory find and click on our school
4. Click on 'School Documents, policies and reports' from the bottom of the page to access our school policies.

Note: If you are unable to access our website, please contact the school for more information regarding our school policies.

Characteristics of the Student Body

EREAFLSL and Wollongong Flexible School welcome students who have a diverse range of personal characteristics and experiences. These characteristics and experiences may be attributed to physical, religious, cultural, personal health or wellbeing, intellectual, psychological, socio-economic, or life experiences. We provide a range of personnel and resources to support access to, and participation in, learning for all young people.

Our student body are domestic students from several different cultures and nationalities. The following tables provide an overview of our student population:

ENROLMENTS BY YEAR AND YEAR LEVEL

	2024
Year 7	6
Year 8	11
Year 9	18
Year 10	41
TOTAL	76

(data derived from Commonwealth Census data submissions for the years displayed)

STUDENT BODY CHARACTERISTICS

	2024
Male	42.86%
Female	51.95%
Gender Diverse	5.19%
First Nations	41.56%
NCCD	84.42%

(data derived from Commonwealth Census data submissions for the years displayed)

Student Outcomes

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Overall student attendance at our school in 2024:

Overall attendance rate	47.75%
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Student attendance rate by year level in 2024:

Year 7	55%
Year 8	47%
Year 9	41%
Year 10	48%

(attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.)

How non-attendance is managed

Wollongong Flexible School manages the attendance of its young people in accordance with our Attendance Procedure and supporting guidelines which outline the processes for managing and recording young people attendance and absenteeism. We are committed to celebrating and encouraging young people attendance through consistent practices of roll-marking, record keeping, monitoring, proactive follow-up, and ongoing engagement and relationship building practices with our young people and their families and carers.

NAPLAN

Where relevant, our reading, writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7, and 9 NAPLAN tests are available via the My School website.

How to access our NAPLAN results:

5. Click on the My School link <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>
6. Enter our school name in the search field
7. Click on 'View School Profile'
8. Click on 'NAPLAN' from the top menu to access NAPLAN information.

Note: Our schools participation in NAPLAN will vary from year to year dependant upon the student cohort. Please contact the school for more information regarding NAPLAN.

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

At the time of publishing this Annual Report, the 2024 post-school destinations survey data for our school was not available. This report will be re-published to include this post-school destinations data once it becomes available in late September.

Social Climate

STUDENT WELLBEING

At Wollongong Flexible School the wellbeing and best interests of our young people is our primary consideration. Together with our young people, their families, external service providers, and the community, we build positive learning environments and safe and support spaces to address young people's wellbeing. Through elements of leadership, inclusion, young people voice, partnerships, and support, our pastoral care program is designed to foster supportive relationships to monitor student progress, to advocate on their behalf, to provide advice, direction, and support during difficult personal issues, and overall to support our young people in the achievement of their stated personal and education goals.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At Wollongong Flexible School we consider our families and carers as partners of the school in their young person's education experience. Families and the wider school community are welcomed into our school throughout the school year for various events and activities as interested parties of our school and our young people. Wollongong Flexible School continuously plans and seeks out ways to partner with families and community, recognizing the benefit of these partnerships for our young people, our school, and our community.

In 2024, we planned 2 major opportunities for family and community to engage with our school. IN Term 2, we hosted a Family Fun Day on site at school which attracted many parents and siblings to engage in the dunk tank and sports games as well as art and craft activities. At the end of the year, we hosted a Presentation Day and Christmas Lunch in a local venue, again with many family members attending.

SATISFACTION SURVEYS

The school uses a method of practice that focuses on continual conversations and consultations with parent/carers and young people about how the school is measuring against expectations. These conversations build strong relationships and allows us to celebrate successes and for early identification on areas for improvement.

Staff Profile

TEACHER STANDARDS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Wollongong Flexible School requires its teaching staff to hold a valid Teacher Accreditation with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), a current Working with Children Check, and must meet the suitability to teach requirements which relate to qualifications, competency, integrity, experience, and professional conduct.

Qualifications

The below table depicts the percentage of teaching staff and school leaders who hold the listed qualifications:

Doctorate or higher	0%
Masters	50%
Bachelor	50%
Diploma	0%
Certificate	0%

Teacher Accreditation Status

The below table depicts the accreditation statuses of our teaching staff:

Proficient	9
Provisional	0
Conditional	1

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

The staff at Wollongong Flexible School are highly qualified, experienced, and generous professionals who consistently contribute to our school in a manner that goes above and beyond expectation.

The following tables provide an overview of our staff profile and workforce composition:

Staff numbers

	Headcount	FTE
Teaching Staff	9	7.00
School Leaders	6	3.00
Non-Teaching Staff	9	6.90
TOTAL Staff	24	16.90

Staff characteristics

	2024
Male	70.83%
Female	29.17%
Gender Diverse	0.00%
First Nations	0.00%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Wollongong Flexible School ensures that all school staff, in particular its teaching and leadership staff, are provided regular opportunities and access to professional learning that builds knowledge, understanding, and skills.

Professional development activities undertaken by staff in 2024 included:

- Annual training updates in Child Safety, Risk Management and Duty of Care.
- Facilitator training to allow our own staff to deliver Verbal Intervention training to assist with de-escalation strategies.
- Berry Street Education Model training.
- First Aid and CPR renewals.
- Doing School Differently conference to engage with practitioners doing similar work across Australia.
- Individual reflective supervision.
- EREA Flexi Foundation Skills Training.

School Financials

(All financial data derived from Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire data submissions for the year displayed)

SCHOOL INCOME

The 2024 school income for Wollongong Flexible School reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardised national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the mySchool website.

How to access our Finance data:

1. Click on the My School link <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>
2. Enter our school name in the search field
3. Click on 'View School Profile'
4. Click on 'Finances' from the top menu to access funding information.

Note: If you are unable to access the mySchool website, please contact the school for our financial data.

SCHOOL EXPENDITURE

The 2024 school expenditure for Wollongong Flexible School reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardised national methodologies and broken down into salaries, allowances, and related expenses, non-salary expenses, and capital expenditure is depicted in the graph below:

