



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA

# FLEXIBLE SCHOOLS



## END OF YEAR REPORT 2025



# **WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE AS THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS ON WHICH OUR SCHOOLS ARE LOCATED.**

We are inspired and nurtured by their wisdom, spirituality and experiences. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for reconciliation and justice, and we pay our respects to Elders, past and present. As we take our next step, we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

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# MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd (EREAFLS) has continued its vision to walk with those Young People most in need as they become empowered to live full and hope-filled lives. EREAFLS is a subsidiary company of the Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia (TEREA).

TEREA has been consolidating the change management and building on governance practices and capacity to enable the organisation to flourish and meet the increasing need for flexible and inclusive school settings.

the transformational leadership of my colleague Peter Pearce, the previous Chair, in leading these improvements. Planning for intentional growth to meet demand has been undertaken this year and EREAFLS looks forward to progressing planning for

of conducting relationships and engagement which aligns with Flexi relational practice.

Since I joined the Board in October 2024, and my appointment as Chair in May 2025, I have been privileged to visit Edmund Rice Special Education Services (ERSES) Schools, St Edmund's College and St Gabriel's School, and Flexi Schools including Hemmant, The Centre Education Programme, Geraldton, Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexi (Elizabeth and Davoren Park campuses), Inala, Ipswich, Albert Park, Noosa and Gympie. I look forward to visiting all schools by the end of 2026. These visits, and my time with Flexi and ERSES staff and community are inspiring and

**“I have witnessed their passion, professionalism, energy and dedication as they walk with Young People on their educational and personal journeys.”**

The EREAFLS Board has evolved in its governance practices for models of decision making and strategic discernment. The Board has also led strategies to manage growth and new initiatives. I acknowledge

a number of new Flexi campuses throughout 2026.

In 2025, the Church led by the Pope and TEREA have also modelled a more synodal way



humbling as I have witnessed their passion, professionalism, energy and dedication as they walk with Young People on their educational and personal journeys. It's apparent that the work of EREAFSL reflects the Gospel message of Jesus Christ - one of unconditional love for all, especially the most marginalised - in action. When teachers, youth and support workers walk with Young People they are walking in Edmund Rice's footsteps. Using corporate language, one would ascribe a positive workplace culture and mission alignment to EREAFSL. A more human observation is that there is a magical quality to these schools where joy, humour, hope and innovation seem to triumph over the regular difficult and challenging times.

The leadership of EREAFSL has met the challenges of the change management process and the implementation of organisational frameworks to meet human resource and compliance and risk demands. I acknowledge and congratulate the CEO, Dr Matt Hawkins, and the Leadership team on steering EREAFSL through significant changes in the way they operate whilst delivering transformative educational opportunities and care for their communities. Matt's leadership, characterised by humility and humanity, is a model for his peers.

I also acknowledge and thank new, continuing and previous Board directors for their generous contribution to the governance of

EREAFLSL. Their work and energy have built a strong foundation for wise stewardship and best practice governance in 2026 and the future.

In closing, I say thank you to all the Young People of Flexi and ERSES schools in 2025. Your courage, resilience, and work towards your personal and educational goals are the reason and inspiration for the work that we do for EREAFSL.

**Helen Spain**  
Board Chair, Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd



# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

As we come to the end of our third year of existence under our new governance structure, I have been reflecting upon the past, present and future. There has been much happening that has given pause for reflection on where we've been, where we are, and where we're going.

2025 saw the formal launch of the EREAFSL Strategic Plan 2025-2027, and the beginnings of the important works aimed at delivering on this ambitious and exciting plan. In essence, the plan confirms our identity as an authentic, contemporary expression of Catholic education in the Edmund Rice tradition, and articulates our vision as walking with those Young People most in need as they become empowered to live full and hope-filled lives.

Amongst many initiatives, this year has also seen the release of both the Flexi Practice Framework and the Transformative Learning Model, two documents which build upon decades of work and wisdom, while simultaneously painting a picture of our future in the practice and pedagogy spaces. This work will ensure that Young People remain at the centre of all we do, and that our staff are equipped with the necessary skills, mindset and support required to do this important work.

In relation to supporting staff, it was my honour to be present and to speak at our inaugural "Walking on Common Ground" Event on Friday 24 October in Brisbane. The night doubled as the launch of the Martin Kelly Staff Scholarship, an initiative designed to support staff who may not have had significant formation and development opportunities in the past. The scholarship is named in Martin's honour, as Martin was a champion for staff, especially Youth Workers, and believed in the ability for adults to have a life-changing impact on the lives of Young People, and in doing so, perhaps even change their own lives.

As I reflect on the history of our organisation, I think about our two amazing Special Schools in

**"This work will ensure that Young People remain at the centre of all we do, and that our staff are equipped with the necessary skills, mindset and support required."**



**“WE ARE EXCITED TO NOW BE EMBARKING UPON A GROWTH PHASE, AS THERE IS CLEARLY GREAT NEED.”**

Sydney, St Edmund's and St Gabriel's. These schools continue to inspire, so much so in fact that we have now begun in-depth planning towards a new Edmund Rice Special School offering in Gordon Park, Brisbane. This will become the only Catholic Special School in Queensland, and our hope is to become a shining light in this space, providing choice for families who currently lack the option of a Catholic education for their child.

Importantly, in the first three years of our existence as EREAFSL, we have chosen not to open any new schools, as we have instead focused on consolidating our current schools and building new, fit-for-purpose systems and structures for our schools and our new organisation. We are excited to now be embarking upon a growth phase, as there is clearly great need, and we are ready to

help in meeting this need. I greatly look forward to sharing more news about the addition of new Flexi and Special Schools in 2026.

As we plan for growth, in response to this significant community need, the importance of respecting and building upon our past, our traditions, our relationships, our practice and our identity, is more important than ever. We will be welcoming more and more new faces and new ideas into our organisation in the coming years, so holding our stories close, and sharing those stories regularly is critical to ensuring we continue to be authentically Catholic Flexi and Special Schools in the Edmund Rice tradition into the future.

I would like to sincerely thank our Board Chair, Ms Helen Spain, along with previous Board Chair, Mr Peter Pearce, and the entire EREAFSL Board. Their passion for our schools, their alignment to the vision and purpose of EREAFSL, and their support of our team, has been astounding and greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank TERE, especially Dr Liam Smith, Dr Stephen Brown and Dr Michael Slattery, for their

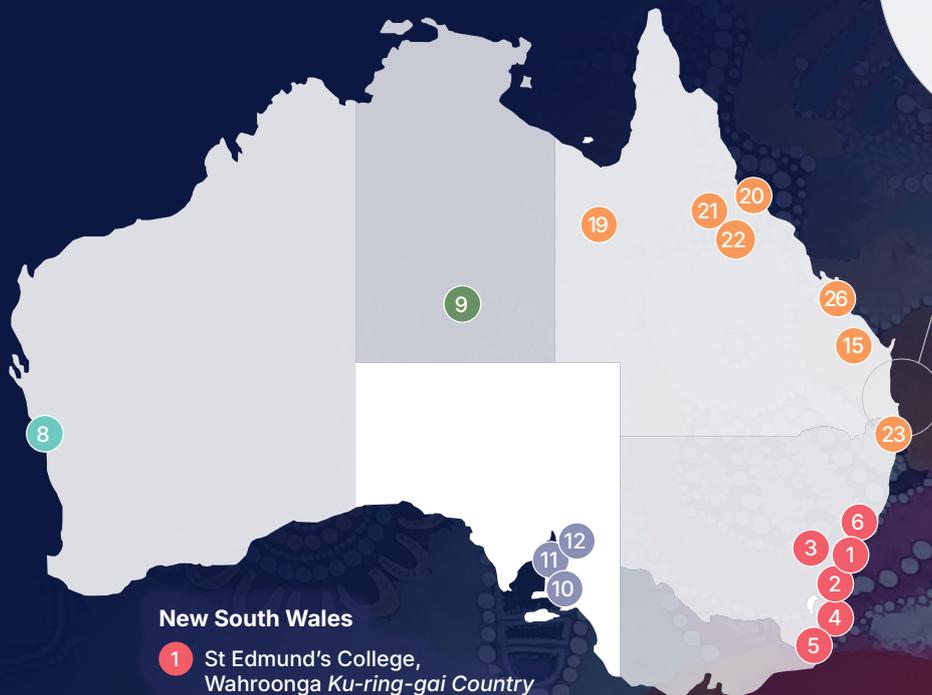
guidance and support in these early years of our new governance structure.

Thank you to my colleagues who work in the National Team, Regional Support Teams and of course at Flexi and Special Schools – more than 780 people working every day in the service of some of the most important Young People in the country.

Finally, congratulations to the Young People who have had the courage and resilience to walk through the gates and engage in a learning experience which we hope has been safe, fun and life-giving. We can't wait to continue to support you in 2026.

**Dr Matt Hawkins**  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Edmund Rice Education  
Australia Flexible Schools Ltd

# OUR LOCATIONS



## New South Wales

- 1 St Edmund's College, Wahroonga *Ku-ring-gai Country*
- 2 St Gabriel's School, Castle Hill *Dharug Country*
- 3 St Mary's Flexible School, St Mary's *Dharug Country*
- 4 Wollongong Flexible School, Towradgi *Dharawal Country*
- 5 Pambula Beach Flexible School, Pambula *Yuin Country*
- 6 St Laurence Flexible Learning Centre, Newcastle *Awabakal and Worimi Country*

## Tasmania

- 7 St Francis Flexible School, West Moonah *Palawa Country*

## Western Australia

- 8 Geraldton Flexible School, Geraldton *Yamatji Country*

## Northern Territory

- 9 St Joseph's Catholic Flexible School, Alice Springs *Arrernte Country*

## South Australia

- 10 Edmund Rice Flexi School, Elizabeth *Kaurna Country*
- 11 Edmund Rice Flexi School, Davoren Park *Kaurna Country*
- 12 FAME (Flexible Accredited Meaningful Engagement), Christie Downs *Kaurna Country*

## Queensland

- 13 The Centre Education Programme, Kingston *Jagera Country*
- 14 Deception Bay Flexible School, Deception Bay *Gubbi Gubbi Country*
- 15 Gympie Flexible School, Gympie *Gubbi Gubbi Country*
- 16 Hemmant Flexible School, Hemmant *Turrbul Country*
- 17 Noosa Flexible School, Sunshine Beach *Gubbi Gubbi Country*
- 18 Albert Park Flexible School, Milton *Jagera and Turrbul Country*
- 19 Mount Isa Flexible School, Sunset *Kalkadoon (Kalkatungu) Country*
- 20 Townsville Flexible School, Townsville *Bidal and Wulgurukaba Country*
- 21 Burdekin Education Program, Ayr *Bindal and Juru Countries*
- 22 Bowen Flexible School, Bowen *Juru Country*
- 23 Southport Flexible School, Southport *Yugambeh Country*
- 24 Ipswich Flexible School, Ipswich *Jagera, Yuggera, and Ugarapul Country*
- 25 Inala Flexible School, Inala *Turrbul Country*
- 26 Rockhampton Flexible School, Rockhampton *Darumbal Country*

# ERAFSL BELIEVES THAT A LIBERATING EDUCATION, BASED ON A GOSPEL SPIRITUALITY, WITHIN AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY, WILL FACILITATE THE CO-CREATION OF A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL.

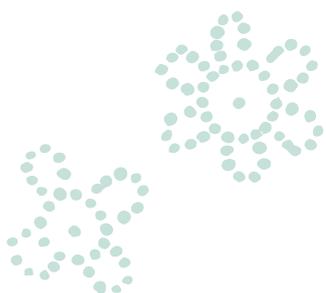
## WHAT WE DO

We educate over 2,500 Young People across 24 Flexi School sites Australia-wide, and two Special Schools in New South Wales.

Flexis exist to create opportunities for Young People who have disengaged from mainstream schooling. Founded on strengths-based, trauma-aware learning, we work on Common Ground where everyone has a voice and agency in decision making. Our core principles of **safe and legal, honesty, participation, and respect** guide our practice.

While Young People in our Special Schools travel a different path, the goal of preserving attachment to appropriate education and successful post-school pathways remains. These schools offer a unique learning experience that is making a profound impact on Young People and their families.

Empowered by liberating teaching and learning experiences, we support each Young Person to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for a full and rewarding life. We believe in the potential of every Young Person and work tirelessly to enable them to flourish.



# 2025 INSIGHTS

Take a look at our growing community of educators, support staff, Young People and leaders across each of our 24 Flexi School sites and two Special Schools.

**26** SCHOOL SITES

**783** STAFF

**2,501**

**YOUNG PEOPLE**

**284**

**YOUTH WORKERS  
& TEACHER AIDES**

**307**

**FLEXI RTO CERTIFICATE  
COMPLETIONS**



# 100%

**YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OFFERED  
TRANSPORT TO AND FROM  
FLEXI SCHOOLS**

# 100%

**OF FLEXI SCHOOLS PROVIDED  
MEALS FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE  
AND STAFF**

# 100%

**OF FLEXI SCHOOLS OFFERED  
STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES TO  
HELP YOUNG PEOPLE THRIVE  
AFTER YEAR 12**

# EREAFSL IN 2025: HONOURING OUR STORY, SHAPING TOMORROW

2025 has been a year of transformation and possibility for EREAFSL. We stand at a pivotal moment - one that calls us to honour the story that brought us here while boldly shaping the future ahead.

This is more than a reflection; it is a recommitment to our mission and a celebration of the creativity, resilience, and hope that define our community. Our journey is not just about where we have been, but about the vision we carry forward: to create spaces where every

Young Person can thrive and every adult can grow alongside them.

As we look to the future, our mission remains clear: to nurture identity, honour traditions, and embrace innovation. With new voices and fresh ideas joining

our movement, we will continue to share stories and hold them close, ensuring that Flexi and Special Schools live out their purpose authentically in the Edmund Rice tradition, now and for generations to come.

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

This year, we launched our first Edmund Rice Education Australia Flexible Schools Ltd Strategic Plan which outlines our vision and purpose as we strive to achieve our strategic goals for the coming years.

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to provide a roadmap for our organisation to define our long-term goals and identify strategies to continue to provide a liberating education to those Young People most in need.

Earlier this year, the National Executive Team also commenced our first Roadshow tour which unveiled more exciting projects, and provided an opportunity

for us to witness the fantastic transformations occurring at our schools across the country.

It was also an opportunity for school leaders and Regional Teams to engage with the Strategic Plan, dream big about possibilities, and ask questions about specific projects.

There is so much to look forward to in the Flexi and

Special School space, and we look forward to continuing to walk this path with you.





"As EREAFSL plan for future growth, the commitment to honouring traditions, practices, and identity remains central."

# 2025 HIGHLIGHTS: CELEBRATING PEOPLE AND POSSIBILITY

At the heart of EREAFSL are the Young People and staff who bring our mission to life every day. Their experiences reflect the power of radical inclusion, hope and opportunity - values that shape everything we do.

Across our community, these stories highlight resilience, creativity, and the transformative impact of education where relationships come first. They show how our communities walk together on Common Ground,

guided by the principles of **safe and legal, honesty, participation, and respect**, and how collaboration between youth workers, educators, and Young People creates spaces where every voice matters.

These are more than stories - they are proof that when Young People feel safe, supported, and empowered, they thrive. We invite you to explore the moments that define who we are and the future we are building together.

## EMBEDDING FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES IN LEARNING

Throughout 2025, St Francis Flexible School has deepened its commitment to First Nations-informed education by focusing on Tasmanian First Nations histories and cultural practices, particularly the significance of bark canoes and water country.

Staff member Matt Smith, a Palawa man, led the program which included a series of learning sessions exploring the enduring cultural connections between Palawa people and the waterways of Nipaluna/Hobart. These sessions traced thousands of years of history, highlighting the sophisticated knowledge systems that sustained Palawa communities and examining the profound impacts of colonisation alongside the resilience of ongoing cultural practices.

Following three classroom-based sessions, Young People participated in a guided kayaking

experience along the Derwent River. This immersive activity provided a unique opportunity to connect with place and reflect on the ways Palawa people have interacted with these waters for

generations - spanning from 300 years to thousands of years ago. The experience fostered a deeper understanding of Country and its central role in cultural identity.





## RICE CUP TOUCH FOOTBALL CARNIVAL

The QLD/NT Regional Team proudly hosted the first-ever Rice Cup Touch Football Carnival at St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace Playing Fields in Brisbane this year. This special event brought together Young People and staff from EREAFSL across Queensland and the Northern Territory, celebrating the spirit of participation, collaboration, and healthy competition.



# LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM ABROAD

Earlier this year representatives from EREAFSL were delighted to take part in the Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders Leadership Symposium in South Africa.

Louise Willie, National Project Officer - Safeguarding Practice, and Andrew Kirkpatrick, Director of First Nations Education, had the opportunity to strengthen their educational and gospel leadership skills alongside 30 other key leaders from Edmund Rice schools and organisations around the world.

The symposium provided an opportunity for participants to connect and build global networks with like-minded educational leaders, all sharing a common vision for social justice and improving outcomes for Young People.

Louise and Andrew shared ideas, programs and resources centred

on leading schools in the Edmund Rice tradition, highlighting the flexible learning approaches used in Australia. This was an area that sparked great interest among international educators.

Throughout the experience, the group also explored and celebrated African culture, spirituality, leadership and educational practices, while gaining deeper insight into the

nation's history of struggle and achievement.

A particular highlight for staff was visiting Edmund Rice schools across South Africa (Johannesburg and Kimberley) and witnessing firsthand how the Edmund Rice story continues to unfold globally through shared experiences and storytelling.

**“The symposium provided an opportunity for participants to connect and build global networks with like-minded educational leaders.”**





## FAME COMMENDED FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL DESIGN

Photo source: learningenvironments.org.au

FAME was proud to be recognised at the prestigious Learning Environments Australasia Design (LEAD) Awards in Brisbane this year, receiving a LEAD Commendation for its newly developed campus and innovative educational facilities.

The LEAD Awards celebrate outstanding learning environments across Australasia that exemplify innovation, purposeful design, and collaborative engagement between architects, educators, and communities.

FAME's new campus was strategically designed to align with the school's mission and

trauma-informed practice, creating spaces that support diverse and Flexible learning approaches. Each classroom integrates dedicated wellbeing areas and outdoor courtyards, complemented by purpose-built facilities for music, hospitality, technology, STEM, and other specialist programs.

This achievement reflects a rigorous design process informed by consultation with staff, Young People, and educational experts to ensure the campus meets the evolving needs of the entire school community. It stands as a testament to FAME's commitment to delivering world-class learning environments that foster wellbeing, creativity, and inclusion.

We extend our sincere thanks to all contributors to this project. This recognition underscores our dedication to shaping the future of education through thoughtful, innovative design.

## YOUNG PEOPLE DRIVE FURNITURE FOR CHANGE

Starting and running a business isn't just about making a profit – it's about learning, problem solving and gaining the confidence to navigate the world of work.

For a group of Young People who have been disenfranchised from mainstream education, a unique programme is proving that skills, experience and determination matter just as much as a qualification.

The Centre Education Programme is offering educational pathways for Young People in years 7-12 that are personalised for each Young Person. The Furniture for Change project, led by teacher Andrew Tipping, encourages Young People to plan, launch, and operate their own small enterprise by refurbishing old furniture and

building flat pack items, such as coffee tables and bookcases.

Furniture for Change helps Young People gain experience in everything from financial literacy and budgeting to customer service and negotiation. They handle marketing, supply chain logistics, and project management - valuable skills that can be applied across multiple industries.

Since it commenced in 2020, Furniture for Change has helped more than 40 Young People successfully transition from school to the workforce.



# CELEBRATING LEGACY AND LEADERSHIP: LAUNCH OF THE MARTIN KELLY STAFF SCHOLARSHIP

In October, we proudly hosted our first-ever Martin Kelly Staff Scholarship fundraising event, *Walking on Common Ground*, at Eat Street River Deck in Brisbane.

This milestone occasion brought together colleagues, partners, and supporters to honour the extraordinary legacy of Martin Kelly - a visionary leader whose compassion and commitment to vulnerable and disenfranchised Young People helped shape the transformative educational approach known as Flexi Practice.

development, and ongoing learning opportunities, the Martin Kelly Staff Scholarship reaffirms our commitment to empowering those who make a lasting impact in the lives of Young People.

The evening was a resounding success, marked by heartfelt reflections, inspiring



“The evening was a resounding success, marked by heartfelt reflections, inspiring conversations, and a shared sense of purpose.”

Martin's influence continues to resonate in the safe, inclusive, and life-changing learning environments that flourish across Australia. The scholarship established in his name will carry forward this legacy by investing in the professional growth of our educators. Through advanced training, leadership

conversations, and a shared sense of purpose. Guests enjoyed the opportunity to connect, celebrate, and contribute to a future where our Flexi School communities continue to thrive.

We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who attended and supported this inaugural event.

It was more than a celebration; it was a powerful commitment to leadership and learning. Together, we honour Martin Kelly's vision and ensure his legacy continues to shape lives for generations to come.





Michelle Kinnane and Lisa Hamill



Brooke Taylor



Lorraine Browne



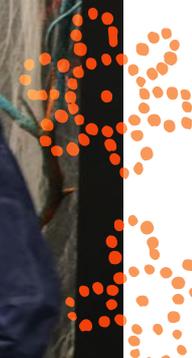
Donna Pares and Tracie Pratt



Sonya Coghill with her son Michael Coghill



Anne Kelly and Patrick Kelly



## COLOURS IN THE WILD: A CELEBRATION OF CREATIVITY AT ST EDMUND'S COLLEGE

This year, the St Edmund's College Wahroonga community came together for an unforgettable evening at Colours in the WILD - the Eddie's Art Show, showcasing the incredible creativity and talent of our students.

The College Hall was transformed into a vibrant gallery filled with birds, botanical wonders, jellyfish, and imaginative creatures - each piece telling its own unique story and reflecting the humour, heart, and imagination of Eddie's artists.

Led by CAPA Coordinator Ms Minkley and the Art Department, students across all year levels contributed stunning works: magical insects from Years 5 - 6, quirky birds in Year 7, pigeons in Year 8, jellyfish in Year 9, botanicals in Year 10, portraits in Year 11, and an extraordinary collection of animal-inspired pieces from the Year 12 Creative Arts class.

Guests explored highlights such as the Underwater Jellyfish Cave installation and enjoyed the launch of the St Edmund's College first student-designed merchandise line - featuring tote bags, magnets, coasters, cards, and limited-edition art prints.

The event was supported by generous contributions from McFarlands Quality Meats, Bakers Delight Hornsby, and IGA Wahroonga, with volunteers from St Pius X College running the barbecue and art-making station where attendees created their own quirky birds. It was truly an event

to remember - a celebration of creativity, community, and the spirit of St Edmund's.

As a Year 5 -12 college dedicated to supporting Young People with intellectual disabilities, art plays a vital role in the St Edmund's program.



# FROM CLASSROOM TO OCEAN:

## Flexi Schools Embrace Adventure-Based Learning

This year, 140 Young People from Flexi Schools across Australia have set sail on unforgettable tall ship adventures aboard South Passage, diving into hands-on, adrenaline-filled learning experiences that spark confidence, teamwork, and discovery.

The excursions formed part of schools' adventure-based learning programs and gave Young People and staff the opportunity to tackle the challenges of sailing while supporting each other through teamwork.

Approaching the voyages, Young People had differing degrees of anxiety, capacity and excitement but staff remained proud of their efforts, as they challenged their fears to take part in a memorable experience with peers.

Kaylee from Townsville Flexible School summed up the experience with her comments regarding the school's three-day voyage in the waters of Cleveland Bay:

"It was lots of hard work raising and lowering the sails, so everyone was exhausted by the end of it, but it was an amazing and unique experience that every student should have the opportunity to have."

South Passage has taken more than 40,000 Young People on voyages that range from three hours to eight days. It is the only tall ship in Queensland.



# BUILDING INDEPENDENCE THROUGH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

In July, St Gabriel's School hosted its inaugural Professional Learning Day, bringing together more than 130 passionate educators and allied health professionals.

The event centered on the theme *Building Independence Through Inclusive Education*, highlighting practical, evidence-based strategies to support neurodiverse students both in the classroom and beyond.

Participants engaged in a dynamic program of presentations and hands-on workshops led by St Gabriel's experienced team. Throughout the day, attendees explored innovative approaches to fostering independence and creating inclusive learning environments for every student. The event encouraged collaboration, sparked meaningful conversations, and inspired the exchange

of practical insights that educators could implement within their own school communities.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, affirming the value of this initiative in shaping inclusive practices. We look forward to building on this success and continuing to empower educators at next year's event.



# WHAT'S NEXT FOR EREAFSL

Across the country, we are entering an inspiring new chapter in our mission – one defined by growth, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to courageously respond to the unmet educational needs of Young People and communities.

At the heart of this mission is our belief that strong relationships and Common Ground create the conditions for Young People to thrive. Guided by Strategic Priority One in the EREAFSL Strategic Plan, we are dedicated to ensuring that every Young Person has access to personalised, responsive and transformative learning experiences based on approved curriculum and accredited learning, to build the skills and capabilities for positive futures.

Our vision centres on empowering Young People to build confidence, agency and resilience as they navigate aspirational pathways. We support them to see themselves as valued members of safe, enriching communities of belonging - places where their voices matter and their potential is celebrated.

This commitment extends to our staff, whose dedication drives our mission each day.

We continue to build the capacity of our workforce through access to professional development and training.

We know that strong outcomes for Young People are only possible through strong partnerships. That is why we collaborate closely with families, caregivers, community, industry and government agencies. Together, we create expanded opportunities that enhance wellbeing, strengthen learning, and open meaningful post-school pathways for Young People.

Our growth also reflects our readiness to respond where the need is greatest. By establishing new Special and Flexi Schools in communities experiencing significant unmet need, we extend our reach and deepen our impact - ensuring that no Young Person is left without access to the education and care they deserve.





Berrimah, Darwin



Gordon Park, Brisbane



Werrington, Sydney



Wynyard, North West Tasmania

## WHAT'S NEXT? THE FUTURE IS BOLD AND AMBITIOUS

### New School Sites in Delivery Phase:

- Campus of St Joseph's Catholic Flexible School, Berrimah, Darwin - target opening April 2026
- Campus of St Francis Flexible School, Wynyard, North West Tasmania - target opening 2027
- Campus of St Mary's Flexible School, Werrington, Sydney - target opening 2028

### Proposed New Secondary Special School:

- Gordon Park, Brisbane - proposed opening January 2029

These expansions reflect our unwavering commitment to reach more Young People, create safe and dynamic learning environments, and lead the way in alternative education across Australia. By investing in innovation, cultural responsiveness, and wellbeing, EREAFSL will continue to adapt to the changing needs of Young People - ensuring they not only succeed in school but thrive in life.

Our commitment to the four Touchstones of the *Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition* is reflected in how we identify those who need us most; meeting them where they are and understanding their needs; and providing individualised attention within safe and welcoming educational environments.

# OUR TEAM



**Dr Matt Hawkins**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

Matt has worked in Edmund Rice education for 26 years across both mainstream and flexible schools. For the past ten years, Matt has had the privilege of working in Flexis, and for the last three years, as CEO of EREAFSL. He is passionate about social justice, radical inclusion and ensuring that every Young Person has a hope-filled future. Matt's doctoral thesis focused on inclusivity in Catholic education, offering new understandings of authentic educational inclusion in 21st century Australia.



**Kathleen Jones**  
**Chief Operating Officer  
and Company Secretary**

As Chief Operating Officer, Kathleen leads operational strategy and organisational effectiveness, working closely with the leadership team to deliver the organisation's strategic priorities. In the role of Company Secretary, she is responsible for governance frameworks, statutory and regulatory obligations and providing high level support to the Board and its committees. Kathleen is dedicated to building sustainable practices that will support the important work of EREAFSL now and into the future.



**Anna Thompson**  
**Chief Financial Officer**

Anna brings more than 16 years of experience as a leader in financial strategy, modelling, forecasting and digital transformation. As CFO at EREAFSL, Anna develops and executes the financial strategy while overseeing capital projects across 26 school sites. Anna's career began with a tax speciality in chartered accounting and has since expanded into leadership roles in both ASX-listed and educational sectors. Being deeply committed to the schools she supports, Anna's work is driven by a strong desire for Young People to achieve their fullest potential in both their educational and personal achievements.



**Laura McKenzie**  
**National Director of School Support**

With a heart full of compassion and a mind for innovation, Laura McKenzie has dedicated her career to nurturing and protecting young lives. Her journey, rooted in psychology, counselling, and social work, has developed into an 18-year adventure with Edmund Rice Education Australia. Laura's passion for working in a trauma-transformative way has led her to wear many hats, including a national role in safeguarding for EREAFSL. Now, as National Director of School Support, she continues to champion innovative Young Person-centred practices with unwavering dedication.



**Michael Farrell**  
**Regional Director  
NSW & TAS**

For more than 20 years, Michael has committed himself to educational leadership and innovation. His journey began at St Pius X College, followed by a Head of Department role at Abbotsleigh, before returning to Edmund Rice Education as Principal of Special Education Schools, St Edmund's College and St Gabriel's School, which was the most impactful experience of his career. A recipient of the NSW Quality Teaching Award, Michael is also an accredited 'Class or Kind' child protection investigator, reflecting his dedication to safeguarding and supporting vulnerable Young People. Outside of his professional responsibilities, you'll find Michael actively engaging with his local community, coaching sports or contributing to social justice initiatives.



**Adam Richter**  
**Regional Director  
QLD & NT**

As the Regional Director for Queensland and the Northern Territory, Adam is focused on launching and supporting new Flexi Schools across Australia. His journey with EREAFSL began at St Joseph's Catholic Flexible School in Alice Springs and has expanded into leadership roles across Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales. Adam champions the amplification of young voices, strengths and gifts, believing that inclusivity and empowerment are vital to fostering a sense of belonging in education. Prior to his time at EREAFSL, Adam held several leadership and teaching roles across the Northern Territory and Victorian Government schools.



**Paula Bacchiella**  
**Regional Director  
SA & WA**

With a motto of 'always say yes to an opportunity,' Paula has embraced a diverse career journey, from working as a Research Chemist to now being EREAFSL's Regional Director. Paula has held leadership roles in a variety of contexts, schools and states. Her experience spans leadership roles in various contexts, beginning with her work at Xavier Flexi Network in Brisbane. Paula is inspired by the community-centric values of Flexis and is committed to redefining success through student advocacy and a focus on First Nations peoples and cultures.

# OUR BOARD



**Helen Spain**  
**Board Chair**

Helen is deeply committed to social justice, particularly for Young People and marginalised communities. She brings extensive legal experience in child protection, juvenile justice, family violence, and litigation across Northern Territory, Queensland, and New South Wales. Beyond her legal practice, Helen has contributed to governance in the education, aged care, and social justice sectors. As a Board member of EREAFSL, she supports initiatives that empower Young People to discover purpose, build confidence in learning, and develop a strong sense of self.



**Robert Feeney**  
**Non-Executive Director**

A partner at Ernst & Young and previously a Professor of Practice at Monash Business School, Rob has a passion for education. His experience spans industries, focusing on strategic challenges and supporting EREAFSL's mission to empower Young People.



**John O'Connor**  
**Non-Executive Director**

John has driven improvements across Catholic schools in rural, regional and metropolitan communities for more than 25 years. Passionate about advancing opportunities for vulnerable Young People, John sees the EREAFSL's mission as central to his vocation.



**Natasha (Tasha) Roe**  
**Non-Executive Director**

Tasha is a proud Nyikina and Yawuru woman, born and educated on Larrakia Country in Darwin. With 20 years of experience, she works with Catholic Education Northern Territory to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, enrichment, and partnerships, drawing on her background in secondary HPE/Maths teaching and systemic cultural responsiveness. Passionate about culturally appropriate education, Tasha advocates for adapting opportunities to students rather than expecting students to do all the adapting.



**Peter Pearce**  
**Deputy Chair**

With 40 years in not-for-profit governance, Peter brings deep community dedication. His leadership with Common Ground Queensland and other organisations underscores his commitment to supporting disenfranchised youth and changing lives through education.



**Ciaran Handy**  
**Non-Executive Director**

Ciaran, a leader at Scape Australia, uses his background in tourism and real estate to support EREAFSL's vision. He finds satisfaction in visiting schools and witnessing the impact of education on disadvantaged youth.



**Debra Sayce**  
**Non-Executive Director**

With 30 years' experience in Catholic education, Debra has long committed herself to helping Young People flourish, most recently at Catholic Education Western Australia. Known for her Christ-centred, child-focused approach, Debra champions inclusive education and decision making.



**Suzanne Calicetto**  
**Non-Executive Director**

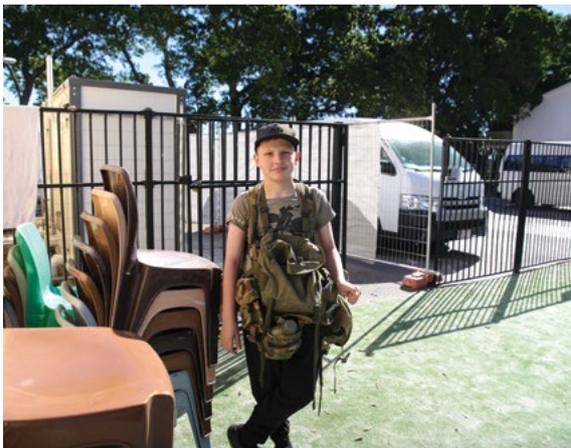
Suzanne is an experienced finance and corporate governance leader with expertise in corporate finance, tax, risk management, and large-scale transformation. She is passionate about building high-performing teams and creating environments where people thrive. Her leadership philosophy focuses on empowerment, accountability, and developing future leaders. Suzanne values continuous learning and is inspired by EREAFSL's mission to help Young People rebuild confidence, curiosity, and hope through education, aligning her commitment to fostering growth and meaningful outcomes.

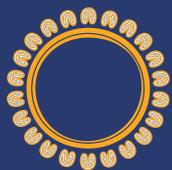


**Kate Hands**  
**Non-Executive Director**

Kate joins EREAFSL as a Non-Executive Director, bringing broad cross-sector leadership experience. Her career spans executive roles in health care, education, finance, and project management, complemented by service on large not-for-profit boards focused on strengthening community impact. Kate looks forward to supporting EREAFSL's mission through practical insight, thoughtful governance, and a deep commitment to aligning strategy with purpose for sustainable outcomes for Young People.







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