

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Family Resource & Residential Program (FRP). The Mission of the FRP is to provide individualised living skills programs for students, in partnership with their families and school, in order to prepare them for independent and interdependent living in the community of their choice.

Each student's strengths and needs are identified and prioritised by the student, the family, school staff and FRP staff, through the Individual Plan (IP).

Student programs are monitored by the Family Resource Assistant and student priority outcomes are identified in the following areas

- participation
- personal care
- household tasks
- recreation and leisure
- communication and socialisation

RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM

The Family Resource and Residential Program operates four houses in the Macarthur area. Each house accommodates five students at any one time, ranging in age from 12 to 18 years. The houses operate from Monday evening to Friday morning and are staffed by Social Educators.

Placements are flexible and may be for 1, 2, 3 or 4 nights per week with the length of stay ranging for one term to a number of years. It is hoped that placements will be short-term purpose specific.

Placement in a particular house will depend on the following

- student's age
- individual needs of student
- existing dynamics of the household
- skills and abilities of staff

FAMILY RESOURCE PROGRAM ASSISTANT

The Family Resource Program Assistant, coordinates the implementation of each student's IP in partnership with the student, the family, school staff and FRP staff.

These programs may occur in the family home, at school, in the residence or in the community and aim to provide consistent support, education and training across all areas of the student's life. They also aim to strengthen relationships within the family, enabling the learning process between family members to be as effective as possible.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Family Resource & Residential Program is only one of a number of Mater Dei services. Other services include

- **Bethany Early Intervention Program** is a family centered program providing an education and therapy program to young children for 0 to 6 years who have a developmental disability and support to their families.
- **Mater Dei School** is an on site co-educational school for students from Kindergarten to Year 12 who have been assessed with mild to Moderate Cognitive Disability. The major focus of the school is inclusion for all students and the comprehensive curriculum for the compulsory school age is based on the Key Learning Areas as outlined by the NSW Board of Studies.
- **The Development Program** assists the organisation's progression and growth by building and ensuring its continued support from within and from the wider community through communication and promotion. At Mater Dei we receive 70% of our funding from government sources and the remaining 30% is raised from our Fee policy and initiatives undertaken by the Development Program eg Golf day, Annual Foundation Dinner, Peace Egg, Mater Dei Foundation membership, preparation of submissions to trusts, foundations and licensed clubs etc.
- Administration staff located at Mater Dei School will answer your questions and concerns or redirect you to the appropriate staff member where necessary. Each member of staff in Administration has a specific area of responsibility. For 2009, the following personnel comprise the Mater Dei Administration team.

Name	Main responsibilities	Days/Hours of Work
Helen Flett	Reception	Mon, Wed & Thurs
Lisa Gruar	Student fees, payroll, Workers Compensation, processing of cheques/monies	Tues, Wed & Thurs
Anne Lauder	Business Manager	Mon to Fri
Tina McManus	Human Resources Officer	Mon, Tues & Fri
Luisa Penman	Secretary to the CEO/Principal, Board of Directors	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & every 2 nd Wed
Katrina Sims	Reception/IT	Mon, Tues & Fri

MANAGEMENT

Mater Dei is managed by a Board of Directors through the Chief Executive Officer/Principal. Each service is managed by a Program Manager.

CEO/Principal	Tony Fitzgerald	(02) 46 557481
Admin/Business Manager	Anne Lauder	(02) 46 557481
Bethany Early Intervention Program Manager	Vida Carmody	(02) 46 557481
Family Resource Program Manager	Jenine Purdy	(02) 46 557481
Assistant Principal	Pamela Templeton	(02) 46 557481
Manager, Development Program	Debbie Gates	(02) 46 557481

DETAILS OF RESIDENCES AND STAFF

Berallier	51 Berallier Drive
	CAMDEN SOUTH 2570
	Phone (02) 46 551200
	Staff Robyn Ford, (<i>Vacant Position</i>), Vicki Underwood
Richardson	42 Richardson Road
	NARELLAN NSW 2567
	Phone (02) 46 461154
	Staff Carmel Farrell, Diane Rose, Rhonda McNeilly
Teralba	4 Teralba Road
	LEUMEAH 2560
	Phone (02) 46 255871
	Staff Shirley Williams, Kate Siffleet, Elaine Farrer
Woolpack	12 Woolpack Street
	ELDERSLIE 2570
	Phone (02) 46 581229
	Staff Jamie Owen, Jane Brennan, Chris Ellis
P/T Family Resource Assistant	Rhonda McNeilly
FRP Manager	Jenine Purdy

FEES AND ALLOWANCES

- See attached Fees Schedule
- All parents/carers of students who are 16 years and under and who attend the FRP for a minimum of two nights or more, must apply for the Assistance for Isolated Children from CENTRELINK. We request that this payment be directed to the school towards payments of residential fees. This amount is assessed by CENTRELINK and is generally payable on a term basis.
- **New applications must be submitted each year and forwarded to CENTRELINK by March 31, of that year.**
- Students over 16 years of age are eligible for either the Disability Support Pension or Austudy and if on the pension, are also entitled to the Education Supplement Allowance of approximately \$30.00 per week. This should be applied for through CENTRELINK. Students who are in receipt of the Disability Support Pension/Austudy are encouraged to pay their contributions each fortnight to assist them in their budgeting experience and independent living skills training. For further information or assistance regarding the above, please contact the FRP Manager.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The FRP is funded under the Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement and is thus responsible for meeting the requirements of standards attached to the Disability Services Act. This involves monitoring by the our funding body, the Ageing and Disability Department (ADD), through regular Self Assessments and scheduled visits to each residence by the Regional Service Support Development Officer (SSDO).

Staff are firstly accountable to the students and families within their care to ensure a safe and harmonious environment and individual programs of a high standard. They are secondly

accountable to the Chief Executive Officer through the FRP Manager and finally to the Good Samaritan Sisters through the Mater Dei Board of Directors.

INDIVIDUAL PLANS (IPs)

An Individual Plan (IP) is written for each student in K – Year 10 and involves a collaborative process with student, parents/carers, Pastoral Teacher, FRP staff and advocates directly concerned. The IP is a written plan of action specifying agreed priorities and outcomes for the following year and its aim is to provide consistent support, education and training across all areas of the student's life.

IP meetings are planned during the year and reviewed annually or earlier if deemed necessary. Pastoral Teachers arrange the IP process for students in their classes and contact parents/carers to commence a mutually suitable appointment. A living skills plan is then written for each student by FRP staff to prioritise learning outcomes to be achieved at residence.

STUDENT FILES

Student files are kept in a locked cabinet at each residence and should contain the following information

- personal information including parents/carers names, address, telephone numbers, emergency contacts etc.
- medical information, including information about the student's disability, medication, contact numbers for doctor's/specialists;
- staff/parent correspondence;
- IP information/programs
- case notes including incident reports, file notes, medication charts etc.

FRP staff must ensure that any information received at the residence is passed on to the FRP Manager so that it can be photocopied and placed in the student's Blue File at school.

All staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the contents of this file which is kept in a locked cabinet at the residences. No information from student files may be photocopied without the permission of the author and/or parents/carers. Parents/carers and students may have access to files on request.

COMMUNICATION

All students are asked to bring their student diary or communication book from school to residence each afternoon to provide a means of communication between residence, school and home. FRP staff read diaries upon their arrival at the residence to ensure daily information is noted. FRP staff write in students' diaries on a regular basis to advise of positive achievements during the student's time in residence. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own diaries and deliver them to their parents, carers and Pastoral Teachers wherever possible.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- Staff will inform students of a range of appropriate community activities in which they may wish to participate.
- The student through the IP process chooses activities, which are identified as a way of teaching specific skills. Such activities should include travelling by public bus, access to TAFE courses etc.

- These activities are undertaken with individuals or with small groups.
- Staff will provide support, if required, to allow community participation.
- Outcomes of student participation will be monitored by the Family Resource Assistant through the IP process.
- Staff will follow the Mater Dei Complaints Handling policy and procedure when handling complaints about any alleged negative behaviour of students in the community.
- Staff will respond appropriately to a complaint from a student about community activities in which they have participated.

STUDENT ABSENCE

Parents/carers are asked to advise FRP staff of a student's absence, where possible, having already advised the relevant Administration staff at school and taxi driver if applicable.

MEDICATION

Many students are on regular medication for a range of reasons and FRP staff are familiar with each student's medical history. All medication must be transferred from home/school to residence either weekly or monthly via Taxi Drivers who will hand it in to First Aid upon their arrival at Mater Dei.

If students travel by bus, medication must be handed to Pastoral Teachers upon student's arrival at school, who then pass it on to FRP staff. All medication must be clearly labelled with the student's name, name of medication, dosage and time in webster paks. The webster pak is required to legally verify the contents so other containers will not be accepted. Written information and authorisation regarding details of medication must accompany medication at the commencement of each school term. If parents/carers are not able to place medication in a Webster Pack, then it must be forwarded in its original packaging with the pharmacist dispensing label on it.

At the end of each school term "left over" medication will be returned to parents/carers via Taxi Drivers.

CONFIDENTIALITY

FRP staff do at all times, respect the organisation's policy of confidentiality which includes the following practices

- only information which is deemed relevant to providing effective programming will be gathered;
- all information pertaining to a student will be kept in a locked file both at the residence and at the school;
- written permission from students/families will be required prior to information being released to other agencies;
- students/families may see files on request;
- copies of information not written by Mater Dei staff can only be released with written permission from the author;
- students are able to receive personal mail and to have private telephone conversations and meetings with family, friends etc.;
- staff sign a confidentiality agreement upon commencement of employment.

STUDENT ACCIDENT/ILLNESS

If a student arrives at the residence unwell or becomes unwell and basic care does not see improvement, parents/carers will be contacted by the FRP staff or the FRP Manager. and

asked to collect their daughter/son, particularly if the complaint is considered to be infectious. If the parents/carers are unavailable, then the student's emergency contact will be informed and suitable arrangements will be made for the student to be collected from the residence.

In the event of a student having a serious accident or being ill enough to cause concern, an ambulance will be called and parents/carers or the student's emergency contact will be informed.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy underpins all that we do at Mater Dei, hence we believe that all students and families have a right to individual advocacy which will respond effectively to the involvement of advocates on behalf of families and students.

Advocacy can be defined as "speaking on behalf of another" and can involve representing an organisation through articulating the mission and supporting and defending the organisation's message. It also relates to representing and defending the rights of individuals with disabilities which can involve taking students into the local community and supporting them so that the community can change their perceptions of people with a disability.

FRP staff must at all times, respect the organisation's guidelines on Advocacy which includes the following practices

- families are an integral part of the ISP/ITP process which ensures that they plan their desired outcomes for their son/daughter in consultation with the FRP staff, school staff and the student, where applicable.
- families involved with the FRP are made aware of various advocacy services which they may access in their community.
- in keeping with Advocacy principles, FRP staff will always contact parents/carers for their permission prior to contacting other services on their behalf.
- FRP has a Complaints Handling Policy that provides a pathway for resolution of conflict with Mater Dei personnel or through the intervention of the Community Services Commission. Parents/carers are to be made aware of this on enrolment.
- FRP maintains contact with local Advocacy Services eg Migrant Resource Centre, Family Support Services.
- FRP has and continues to invite parent/carer representation on the FRP Advisory Committee which meets four times a year.
- Details of all advocates are recorded on the student's file and are updated as necessary.
- All advocates are given current and relevant information regarding the service when they become involved with children.
- For further advocacy support please contact one of the following services
 - NSW Council for Intellectual Disability – 1800 424 065
 - Family Advocacy – 1800 620 588
 - Intellectual Disability Rights Inc. – 1800 666 611
 - Illawarra Citizen Advocacy – (02) 4229 4999
 - People with Disability Australia – 1800 422 015

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In the event of a student having a serious accident or being ill enough to cause concern the following procedure will be followed

- If an accident, qualified staff will administer First Aid and call an Ambulance
- If seriously ill, call an ambulance and inform FRP Manager and other relevant staff
- Inform parents/guardians directly or if unavailable, inform the emergency contact
- Nominated staff member to go to hospital until parent/carer arrives

- Record details on an Accident/Incident report and forward to FRP Manager who will inform the CEO/Principal.

INCIDENT REPORTS

In the event of an incident or accident involving an FRP student, irrespective of the degree or location, all staff who witness the incident/accident must complete an Incident/Accident Report Form. This must be forwarded to FRP Manager, as soon as possible to enable appropriate follow-up eg informing parents/carers etc.

FIRE/EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All residences are fitted with fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. Emergency procedures are clearly displayed in each residence and fire drills are held at least twice a term and outcomes recorded and forwarded to the FRP Manager. Each residence is fitted with a personal safety alarm system, which is used in the event of a suspected break-in or similar unsafe situation. All staff are familiar with this particular procedure.

SMS/ALERT REMINDER SYSTEM

An SMS Alert/Reminder for Mater Dei staff, parents/carers and taxi drivers is in use to communicate appropriate information to staff/taxi drivers on a regular basis.

In no way will this system replace our usual means of communication with staff such as communication/staff meetings, correspondence etc. or with parents/carers such as the student diaries, weekly newsletters and telephone calls.

The personal information you provide to us is included on the Mater Dei database and is accessed and maintained in keeping with the Mater Dei Privacy Policy and the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

VISITORS

Students are encouraged to invite friends from school, other residences or home to their residence. Parents/carers are encouraged to visit the residence at least once a term and are welcome to “drop in” whenever they wish.

PRIVACY

Mater Dei is bound by the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act (December 2001) and uses and manages Personal Information provided to or collected by it in accordance with this legislation. Mater Dei may, from time to time, review and update this Privacy Policy to take account of new laws and technology, changes to Mater Dei’s operations and practices, and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing Mater Dei environment.

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

The FRP is committed to a just resolution of all grievances and will ensure that students, families and advocates ie service users are free to raise any grievance regarding the program and its service delivery and implementation.

- All service users have the right to complain and to have that complaint handled well.
- Internal and external mechanisms are in place and are known by all service users, families and staff.

- There is an obvious service user focus which encourages and acts on service user feedback.
- All documents used in the process of resolving any complaint are distributed on a need-to-know basis only.
- Complainants and other people who provide information are protected from any repercussions, reprisals or victimisation, which may occur as a result of making a complaint.
- All service users and staff involved treat all information as confidential.
- The process is easy to follow and written in plain English or a format appropriate to the needs of service users and staff.
- Help is offered to service users to formulate and lodge complaints.

See attached Complaints Handling Brochure

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

The Behaviour Management Policy at Mater Dei is based on the philosophy that all behaviour is a form of communication. The interpretation of what the behaviour attempts to communicate is the basis for the management of that behaviour. The management of behaviour at Mater Dei is positive and is based on the dignity and respect of the children and young people and the consequences of their behaviour.

The positive approach requires all members of the Mater Dei community to be consistent, clear and co-ordinated about expectations of behavior. This ensures that the children and young people will have a safe and secure environment in which to learn. The aim of the Behaviour Management Policy is to help our children and young people to learn the consequences of their behaviour so that they understand how their actions affect those around them. Once this is understood, they are then empowered to become self-disciplined and self-directed.

The underlying principles of the Mater Dei Behaviour Management Policy are

- It supports self-esteem and allows children and young people to feel capable, competent and interact effectively with others;
- It takes into account the development level of understanding and ability of the child or young person;
- It is expressed positively;
- It guides, gives simple explanations and offers alternatives so that the child or young person can make choices;
- It is consistent;
- It is based on self-discipline and self-control and not coercion.
- It recognises that this is a gradual and developmental process.

Mater Dei expressly forbids the use of corporal punishment by any member of staff and does not and will not delegate or approve the use of corporal punishment by any providers or outside agencies associated with Mater Dei.