Townsville Community Learning Centre
A State Special School
Parent Handbook
**Arrivals and Departures**
If students arrive after 8.15am but before 8.45am they must enter via the access gate at the end of the breezeway or via the drop off zone near P block. Students are not to arrive by taxi or bus before 8.15am as this is when a full complement of rostered staff members commence duty. Staff members on breezeway duty are responsible for receiving students at the access gate. All students will be marked on the attendance register.

At 2.35pm the school day concludes. Students exit the school via the breezeway access gate or via the drop off zone near P block. Students depart the school by taxi, bus or private vehicle.

Parents wishing to take their child home early or for appointments through the day, must report to the office first as they are required to sign their child out in the Early Departure Register.

**Assembly**
A whole school assembly is held at our school each month. Parents are most welcome to attend. At this gathering we endeavour to create a close, friendly atmosphere amongst students, teachers and parents to help build school spirit and morale. During the thirty minute assembly, we recognise achievements and endeavours, welcome new students and acknowledge any special occasions and invited guests.

**Absences**
Parents are asked to notify the school so the class teacher is aware of a child’s absence. It is preferable for parents to phone on the day of the absence. If you have not notified the office a note can be sent on the child’s return to school. It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the bus/taxi service if your child is not attending school. No pupil will be permitted to leave the grounds except on approved school activities unless a request in writing is presented to the principal.

**Booklists**
At the beginning of each year parents are provided with a list of materials required by all students. Please label everything your child brings to school.

**Chaplaincy**
Townsville Community Learning Centre has a school chaplain two days per week. The role of the school chaplain is to support students and the wider community in a range of ways including assisting students to explore their spirituality, providing guidance on religious values and ethical matters and helping school staff in offering welfare services and support in case of bereavement, family breakdown or other crisis and loss situations.

In short the school chaplain provides another area of support to students and families at TCLC. Parents or families wishing to contact the school chaplain can do so through the school office on 47594111.
**Curriculum**
Every student is able to learn and is encouraged to demonstrate progress. Townsville Community Learning Centre strongly focuses on student learning. The curriculum progresses through four phases of learning: Access, Engagement, Bridging and Pathways.

The access learning phase focuses on giving all students multiple opportunities to access learning and develop the knowledge, understandings and skills for success at school; the emphasis being on literacy, numeracy, social and emotional competence, health and physical well-being and active learning processes.

The engagement learning phase is a distinctive period of dynamic growth and change where students have multiple opportunities for learning across a range of contexts and for developing the capabilities necessary for school and beyond. Central to the overall planning and teaching in the engagement phase is incorporating an understanding of how the strengths, interests and talents of individual students will impact on their learnings.

The bridging learning phase focuses on planning for the individual curriculum goals of students. In consultation with parents, Senior Education and training (SET) Plans are developed to establish a student’s goals for future pathways. A PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope) also outlines a clear long term transition path.

The pathways learning phase assists students to transition to a full range of post school destinations. Students in years 10 to 12 are exposed to a variety of learning experiences and programs in a range of settings such as the classroom, the workplace and the community. On exiting, students receive a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA).

**Communication with Students**
Many of the students at TCLC experience receptive and expressive language and communication difficulties. To address these complex communication needs, a variety of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems are adopted and implemented across the school. PODD (Pragmatic Organisational Dynamic Display) is a communication system that has been adopted within classrooms and uses picture symbols to support communication and learning.

The aims of TCLC are:
- that all teaching staff will use multi-modal communication daily in all teaching and learning environments. Comprehensive communication systems will be modelled throughout the day as part of this aim.
- every student with complex communication needs is provided with access to an AAC system and that this is consistently modelled and taught.

**Communication with Parents**
Communication with parents is seen as vital to the success of each student’s program. Close communication is maintained between staff and parents through:
- Communication Books – a message book that travels between home and school each day
• Telephones – every classroom has a telephone, however, unless it is an emergency, we request parents to only ring before or after school to minimise class disruptions. Messages will be taken at the office and teachers will return phone calls during their breaks.
• Emails – parents can contact the school by email at admin@tclcspecs.eq.edu.au
• Meetings are held with teachers and/or therapists to discuss individual student programs and progress. Parents are encouraged to visit the school. Please make a suitable time with your class teacher.
• School Newsletter – a newsletter is sent home every fortnight to keep parents informed about activities and other important news relevant to the school
• School Website – the school website provides access to school documents, policies, newsletters, current events and new items.

Communication from the School
All written communications from the school including permission forms, letters and information bulletins will be sent home from time-to-time for parents to action.

Complaints
During the course of your child's school years, you may have cause to make a complaint about an issue or concern you have with their education.

Townsville Community Learning Centre is committed to ensuring that all complaints are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner. There are processes in place to enable you and your child to work through any issues or concerns you may have.

To achieve an effective resolution for all parties, when making your complaint, you should ensure you:

• provide complete and factual information in a timely manner
• deliver your complaint in a calm and reasoned manner
• avoid making frivolous or vexatious complaints or using deliberately false or misleading information.

You should be aware that if you are making a complaint about a staff member that, in most instances, the staff member will be told of the complaint and offered the right of reply. You also have the right to have a support person participate throughout the process.

The following four-step procedure is in place to assist parents/carers and school staff to reach an outcome that is in the best interest of the student.

1. Discuss your complaint with the class teacher
If your complaint is with your child's teacher or relates to an issue concerning your child's experience at school, make an appointment with that teacher as soon as possible through the school administration. Discuss your complaint with the teacher and give the teacher an opportunity to suggest a solution. The teacher will make a record of your complaint and report your meeting and any outcomes to the school principal. Together, both you and your child's teacher should be able to resolve the problem at this level.

2. Discuss your complaint with the principal
If after approaching your child's teacher your complaint remains unresolved, make an appointment to see the school principal to discuss the issue further. Alternatively, you and
the teacher may agree to ask the principal to act as a go-between in informal conflict resolution in an attempt to resolve the problem.

If your complaint relates to more general school matters, including issues of school policy and issues of compliance or non-compliance, you should raise your complaint directly with the principal. The principal may refer your complaint to a delegate such as the deputy principal or Business Services Manager. The staff member will make a record of your complaint and work with you to come to a resolution.

Complaints to the principal may be lodged in person, by telephone, writing or via email.

3. Contact your local education office
If you have discussed your complaint with the principal and still feel that you have not reached a resolution, you have the right to contact your local departmental office.

Your complaint should be specific in detail and outline the steps you have taken to resolve the issue. Ensure your complaint includes your full name and address and that you have signed and dated it. It is also a good idea to keep a copy for your own records.

Anonymous complaints will only be acted on if enough information has been provided to allow for follow-up with the principal.

When you contact your local education office a record will be made of your complaint. You will also be advised that your name and the nature of your complaint will be reported back to the principal. Local office staff will then work with you and your school to seek a resolution.

4. Independent review
If you have not been able to resolve your complaint through these formal processes, you can lodge your complaint with the Queensland Ombudsman.

**Custody**
If a Custody Order is current, a copy of the Order must be provided to the school. If there is no Custody Order the school will allow both parents to have access to and obtain information about their child/ren. Furthermore, in the absence of any Custody Orders, the school will grant non-custodial parents access to their child/ren. However we will make every reasonable effort to contact the parent/carer who enrolled the child at school.

Disturbances and Disruptions
Any person who wilfully disturbs the management or operation of a school or who abuses a member of staff in the presence or hearing of students whether at the premises or elsewhere during the course of an educational program maybe in breach of the Education (General Provisions) Act. Action can be taken by the school to monitor, restrict and/or limit a persons to school premises.

**Emergency Medical Situations**
If your child is injured at school or is seen to be at risk, you will be contacted immediately. If parents/carers or their nominated person cannot be contacted, the school will call for an ambulance to provide treatment. Therefore it is very important that our records are up-to-date. It would be greatly appreciated if you could notify the office of any changes to contact telephone numbers and/or the names of people to be contacted in case of an emergency.
Emergency Evacuation Procedures
Occasionally situations arise in schools where the quick and safe evacuation of all persons form school buildings is required. Townsville Community Learning Centre has established procedures for the following situations:

A fire drill is conducted at regular intervals. Due to the nature of our school population, staff will be advised of our drill times. Any unscheduled fire alarms will be treated as an actual emergency. All staff must ensure they know their responsibilities as outlined in the school’s fire and evacuation procedures.

A lock down will be initiated in a range of emergency situations where the safety of all students and staff may be at risk.

Facebook
If you are an active user of social media, jump on line and like our page. In the search field we can be located by typing: Townsville Community Learning Centre.

Facilities
The administration block or (A Block) houses the reception area, the principal’s office and offices for other administration staff. The staff room is also located in this block.

The Multi-Sensory Environment is a dedicated space where various sensory experiences can be created, controlled and manipulated in an atmosphere of trust. Sensory experiences are arranged and modified to act on the primary senses and cater for the perceived motivations, interests and needs of the user. A wide range of techniques may be utilised to encourage active or passive interactions, relaxation and learning.

Townsville Community Learning Centre owns and operates three buses, two capable of carrying wheelchairs. The buses are for use in community based programs which enhance the teaching and learning outcomes of classroom programs. They are also used for some sporting events as well as inter-school access visits.

The swimming pool is located towards the front of the school and is heated to an average temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius. The pool is mainly used by students who benefit from aquatic physiotherapy.

The library resource centre is located adjacent to F Block at the front of the school. It provides a number of additional learning spaces for the school. The library resource centre houses the student and teacher resource collection and provides an exciting, modern and fun learning and teaching environment.

Townsville Community Learning Centre has a number of outdoor play and leisure areas that are used for physical education activities, student directed games and sports and school celebrations. All three playground areas contain climbing equipment, the junior and middle sector areas have bike paths and the senior area contains a basketball court.
Family Details Changes
Parents are requested to notify the school of changes of address or phone numbers as soon as possible so contact details and emergency information can be kept current. If you access school transport assistance it is essential to contact the school prior to your move as it takes about seven days to organise any changes.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could advise the school of any family changes – estrangement, divorce, custody orders, bereavement etc as these can cause changes in a child’s behaviour and attitude. We may be able to assist the student with the situation if we are notified.

Four Blocks to Literacy
At TCLC we have embraced a literacy framework called “Four Blocks to Literacy”. This framework has been adapted to make literacy accessible to student of all abilities. The four blocks are guided/shared reading, working with letters, sounds and words, writing and self-selected reading.

Shared/guided reading: assists students to understand that reading involves making meaning from print and/or pictures.
Working with letters, sounds and words: teaches students the skills to read individual words.
Writing: assists students to write a variety of texts for real purposes
Self-selected reading: provides a basis for the generalisation of the skill based instruction.

Health and Sickness
In order to maintain the good health of all children and staff, it is recommended that your child does not attend school when s/he has any type of infectious disease or illness. The Department of Education and Training (DETE) has a detailed policy statement relating to the management of contagious conditions. Please refer to the Time Out Poster for periods of exclusion.

Head Lice
The presence of head lice is a very common childhood condition. The detection and treatment of head lice in students’ hair is the responsibility of parents. The school does not exclude students from class because of the presence of head lice. Instead, if head lice are evident, the school will notify parents to check their child’s head and to treat head lice if found. Teachers will aim to minimise head to head contact of students during school activities to reduce transmission of head lice.

Hygiene Aids
It is the responsibility of parents/carers to provide sufficient disposable continence aids and other personal hygiene items such as wipes, tissues, clothing protectors/bibs and sanitary napkins. These should be age appropriate to maintain the student’s dignity within the school.

Lunches
Most children bring their snacks and other foods in a lunch box. It is recommended that you choose a lunch box that can insulate cold food, especially in the warmer months. Nobody likes mushed or bruised fruit so make sure it doesn’t roll around or get crushed.
It is important to ensure your child can easily open packaged food if you’re going to include it in their lunch box. Clingy plastic on sandwiches can also be difficult for young children to pull apart. Spend some time at home testing these with your child.

**Medication for Children**

If your child requires staff to administer medication to your child at school, please contact the school office in the first instance to discuss your child’s requirements.

Please note, school staff will only administer medication that:
- has been prescribed by a qualified health practitioner (e.g. doctor, dentist)
- is in its original container
- has an attached pharmacy label.

Office staff will ask you to complete and sign Section 1 of the *Administration of medication at school record sheet*.

N.B. If your child requires more than one medication, you will need to complete a form for each medication.

**Requirements for students at risk of anaphylaxis**

If your child is at risk of anaphylaxis, it is important for you to provide the school with your child’s emergency medication and their ASCIA Anaphylaxis Action Plan, completed by your doctor. This Anaphylaxis Action Plan provides the instructions for the school to administer your child’s medication in an emergency, which is specific to respond to their health condition.

**Requirements for students at risk of asthma**

If your child has asthma and requires assistance to administer their medication, it is important for you to provide the school with your child’s emergency medication and their Asthma Action Plan, completed by your doctor. An Asthma Action Plan provides specific instructions for the school to administer your child’s medication.

We recognise that some students are capable of managing their asthma without adult assistance. If you are confident that your child can confidently, competently and safely self-administer their asthma medication, let the school administration know. The school will record your decision and will not require your child’s Asthma Action Plan. Please note that if your child requires assistance in an asthma emergency, staff will provide Asthma First Aid.

**Providing medication to the school**

Before you provide the school with your child’s medication, check the expiry date to ensure it is in-date and there is enough for the agreed time period. It is also a good idea to take a note of the expiry date so that you can replace the medication before it expires.

Please note, school staff will not administer medication that you can buy over-the-counter at chemists and supermarkets (e.g. paracetamol, eye drops, cough syrup) unless it has been prescribed by your child’s qualified health practitioner. For example, the school would administer paracetamol to a student only if it has been prescribed by their dentist to be taken for a short time after dental treatment.

School staff are bound by these regulations and we hope that all parents will acknowledge and cooperate with these rules.
It is safer for all students if you can provide medication to the school in person. If you can’t provide the medication in person, contact the school to determine the easiest and safest approach for the school to receive the medication.

When your child’s medication is no longer required to be kept at school, please collect all unused medication.

Talking to doctors and pharmacists about your child’s medication

You can help the school in administering medication to your child, by talking to your doctor and pharmacist about the packaging of medications. In particular, you could:

• ask your doctor if your child’s medication could be:
  o administered before or after school, rather than during school hours
  o dispensed in a form to make administration easier (e.g. blister packs for tablets, liquid form rather than tablets for gastrostomy devices)

• ask the pharmacist if the medication could be provided in a multi-dose pack with clear administration directions (where appropriate), particularly when multiple medications are prescribed

Where your child’s medication dosage may vary on a daily basis (e.g insulin), you should ask your doctor:

• for written advice to identify who will advise the school of the dosage and
• under what specific criteria (e.g. blood glucose level, behaviour) the dosage will vary.

If you have any concerns regarding your child’s health and medication requirements, please talk to your child’s teacher.

Mission and Values

Our mission is to equip students for life long learning so they can fulfil their valued roles in a changing world. At Townsville Community Learning Centre we commit to:

• Affirming the unique worth of the individual
• Inspiring our students through creative, purposeful and enjoyable learning to maximise their potential
• Thoughtful behaviours
• Respectful and supportive relationships with our school community
• Excellence in professional practice

Newsletters

A school newsletter is sent home every fortnight. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events, school achievements and activities and general school news. The newsletter is a collaborative one with staff rostered to provide articles about class activities.

Personal Items

It is always our intention to prevent damage, theft and arguments about personal items. It is therefore requested that students do not bring toys, electronic games, mobile phones, iPods, music players, DVDs or any personal possessions to school. The only exception to this would be if a teacher requests an item from you. In such cases you will be notified in writing. If students do bring personal items to school, the school will take no responsibility if items are damaged or stolen.
Parents and Citizens Association

The Parents and Citizens Association meet monthly to discuss a range of issues affecting the operation of the school and student programs. Parents and staff who attend these meetings act as an effective advisory group who can influence the school’s strategic direction. The Parents and Citizens Association also have an important role in lobbying for services for students with disabilities.

Parent Participation

Parents are always welcome to attend the school to support classroom programs. The school encourages parent participation. This can include:

- Working as a volunteer in the classroom
- Assisting with school excursions
- Helping to make resources and materials
- Membership in the Parents and Citizens Association
- Assistance with fundraising activities
- Sharing your skills and talents

Privacy

Enrolment

The Department of Education is collects the information for the purpose of school enrolment and student management. Personal information collected by the Department is protected by the Queensland Government’s Information Standard 42 –Information Privacy.

However, in accordance with Information Sharing Protocols and Memoranda of Understanding, some of this information may be passed on to government agencies. Some of these state government agencies include Queensland Health, Queensland Transport, Queensland Police Service and Department of Communities. The commonwealth government, through Centrelink, may require information for matching purposes in relation to the payment of study assistance benefits to some students.

Personal information on the enrolment form can be disclosed to other third parties without the individual’s consent where authorised or required by law.

Attendance/Achievement/Behaviour

While students are enrolled in and attend state schools, school staff will collect personal information about their academic performance, attendance and behaviour for the purpose of monitoring their educational progress and providing educational programs to suit the needs of the student.

This personal information can be disclosed to other third parties without the individual’s consent where authorised or required by law.

Wellbeing, protection and safety

During a student’s attendance, the Department of Education may also collect personal information that relates to the wellbeing, protection and safety of the student. This personal information may be passed on to agencies such as Queensland Health, Queensland Police Service and Department of Communities in accordance with Education Queensland’s Student Protection Policy and other policies relating to student behaviour. This personal information can be disclosed to other third parties without the individual’s consent where authorised or required by law.
QParents
QParents has been created by the Department of Education to provide parents of Queensland state school students with secure online access to their child’s information.

The portal allows you to securely access information about your child and to communicate directly with your child’s school. QParents provides secure, online access to student information such as: attendance details, report cards, timetables, invoices and payment history.

You are able to update your child’s details including address and medical conditions, submit reasons for unexplained absence, notify the school of future absences and make online payments against school invoices. For further information regarding the registration process please contact the school or email Michael Statham mstat2@eq.edu.au

QSchools
The QSchools app is a convenient way to receive up-to-the-minute information from Queensland state schools. The app integrates with the department’s preferred website platform, allowing users to:

- find and favourite your school by searching for the school by name, searching a map or by searching for schools near your current locations
- receive real-time notifications about state-wide emergency alerts as well as school push notifications and important updates through the app
- access the latest news, events and newsletters from your school
- easily access your schools tuckshop an uniform shop information
- view information about your school including class times and contact details
- view social media feeds.

The app can manage updates from multiple schools which is useful for parents who have students in different schools.

Reporting
A system of continuous monitoring and reporting is used to monitor each child’s progress and includes:

- The issuing of written reports at the end of semester one and at the end of the year.
- Formal parent/teacher meetings are once per semester in terms one and three. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these.

Teachers are available throughout the year for informal meetings arranged at times that are mutually suitable.

In order to prevent disruptions to class routines and ensure teachers are available, please contact the school office to arrange a convenient time.

Specialist Support Staff
A Guidance Officer visits Townsville Community Learning Centre on a weekly basis. The role of the school Guidance Officer is to:

- Undertake psychometric assessments
- Assist with the disability verification process
- Provide confidential counselling
- Provide support for the students and their families
- Establish links with outside support agencies

Therapists focus on the outcomes reflected in the student’s Individual Learning Plan (ILP), and use their professional skills to help the student’s team set the priority goals. Therefore, therapists working in an educational setting do not focus on the disability but rather on other areas such as the tasks the student is involved in at school, the school setting itself, and the impact of the student’s disability on their school day.

The type of service will vary according to the needs of the student and his or her educational program. It may include liaison with other services, teachers, families, informal and formal assessment, staff training, equipment prescription and/or programming.

The Occupational Therapists assist students to develop functional skills for everyday life including:
- Student/work skills (e.g. organisation of self, handwriting and computer skills)
- Activities of daily living (e.g. eating, dressing, toileting, using community facilities)
- Play, leisure and recreation (e.g. playground activities).

Physiotherapists contribute to a student’s education programs by:
- Advising on seating and posture
- Advising on mobility in the classroom and school grounds
- Recommending changes to the school environment to allow maximum student participation in school activities
- Preventing or reducing the effects of disability through specialist techniques and support such as provision of specialised equipment
- Providing training and consultation on risk management
- Maximising students’ independence in the school setting to enhance their confidence
- Adaptation of the student’s program or classroom setup.

The Speech Language Pathologists provides a service to identified students within a transdisciplinary team by:
- Direct services to students (diagnostic and review assessments, therapy with students, training in alternative and augmentative communication systems and aids)
- Non-contact activities (therapy program planning, training and inservice for program implementation, resource development, parent interviews and ILP planning
- Service management activities (networking, strategic planning, negotiating services).
- The key student outcomes for speech-language therapy services are language, speech, voice, fluency and oromotor functioning. These areas include semantics, syntax, morphology, articulation, phonology, metalinguistics, literacy and pragmatics.

Starting and Finishing Times
The school day begins at 8.30am and concludes at 2.35pm. First break is from 10.30am – 11.15am and second break is from 1.15pm – 1.45pm. After eating, students participate in games and activities some of which are organised.
Specialised Health Needs
Our school ensures students with specialised health needs, including those requiring specialised health procedures, have access to a reasonable standard of support for their health needs whilst attending school. This means that appropriate health plans are developed and followed for students with specialised health needs, that school staff are aware of the student’s medical condition and that an appropriate number of staff are trained to support the student’s health condition.

Sun Safety
Ensuring students and staff are protected from the harmful effects of the sun is important for our school. Our approach to sun safety ensures that outdoor activities, as far as practicable, do not occur between 10am and 2pm. We also encourage the wearing of hats and swimming shirts. Our school also provides SPF 30+ (or more) broad spectrum sunscreen for student use.

Spare Clothes
A plastic bag with spare clothing should be packed in school bags in case of toileting accidents. It is important to include socks as well as underclothing and shorts.

Student Resource Scheme
The Student Resource Scheme is a voluntary and cost effective alternative to purchasing consumables and materials through reduced prices gained from the school’s bulk purchasing arrangements. If you do not wish to join the scheme you are still responsible for providing your child with the items that would otherwise have been provided by the scheme. This scheme provided the entire package of resources for a set fee. In return for a fee of $90.00 the scheme provides a range of student resources. The Student Resource Scheme also contributes to purchasing of software such as Boardmaker, iPad Apps, Clicker 5. If you wish to join the scheme you are required to complete a Participation Agreement Form.

Transport Assistance
As a parent, you have responsibility for providing or arranging your child's transport between school and home. If you are experiencing difficulty in getting your child to school, you are able to request that an assessment be undertaken to determine eligibility for transport assistance. This is a formal assessment undertaken at the school by a trained school transport assessor. To be eligible, a student must have a disability that necessitates the provision of transport assistance.

If your child is eligible for transport assistance, the school transport assessor will recommend one or more of three types of assistance:

Conveyance assistance which includes an allowance which may be paid if you drive your child to school;

Category 1 transport assistance involves the provision of passes for public transport.

Category 2 transport assistance involves contracted taxi or minibus services. This may be available if your child is unable to use public transport and you have no means of driving
your child to school. You will need to complete a parent application form for this type of assistance.

If your child has a severe disability and is unlikely to ever develop the skills to travel independently, the school transport assessor will acknowledge this extreme hardship for your family and special consideration will be applied in relation to contract transport. The School Transport Assessor is only able to make a recommendation within the parameters of the school transport program and this recommendation then needs to be approved at the local regional office.

If approved, regional office staff will liaise with Department of Transport and Main Roads about the availability of appropriate transport.

**Uniforms**

All students are encouraged to wear the school uniform each day as it helps to establish a routine and gives a sense of belonging. The uniform comprises:

- **Shirt:** Teal polo shirt with school emblem. School shirts are available for purchase from the school office.
- **Shorts:** Navy shorts
- **Socks:** Any colour
- **Shoes:** Joggers or sandals
- **Hat:** Wide brimmed hat or cap

**Website**

Visit our school website at [http://tclcspecs.eq.edu.au](http://tclcspecs.eq.edu.au)