

# ODYSSEY HOUSE



ODYSSEY HOUSE  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## PROGRESSIVE LEARNING CENTRE

## ANNUAL REPORT

**2019**

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## 1. A Message From Key School Bodies - Principal

Throughout 2019, Odyssey House Progressive Learning Centre experienced a year of consolidation and change. We saw the retirement of Principal Mr Ted Foster, followed by a brief period of leadership with Ms Melise Sutton at the helm. The key learning areas include:



- English - English Life Skills, Stage 6 Syllabus
- Mathematics - Mathematics Life Skills, Stage 6 Syllabus
- Art - Creative Arts Life Skills, Stage 6 Syllabus, Visual Arts course
- Choir - Creative Arts Life Skills, Stage 6 Syllabus, Music course
- Computers - Technology Life Skills, Stage 6, Information Processes & Technology course
- Woodwork - Technology Life Skills, Stage 6, Industrial Technology course
- Ceramics - Ceramics Content Endorsed Course, Stage 6
- Work and the Community Life Skills Stage 6

Significantly, we aim to introduce new subject offerings in the coming year with the possibility of vocational training being considered as well.

This annual report provides a snapshot of some of the successes of the last 12 months interspersed with ambitious planning for the future.

### PLC Highlights for 2019

- Administered 138 WRAT (Wide Range Assessment Testing) screening tests to students to determine entry level for educational programs
- Attended four plays, three at the Roslyn Packer Theatre and one at the Sydney Opera House
- Facilitated three choir performances at Narellan BaptistCare
- Delivered regular Art Therapy groups for the Detox students
- Delivered eight Vocational Guidance groups for students, utilizing the DISC model and a Self-Directed Search
- Provided a woodwork market stall at Open Day

A very special thank you to the the CEO of Odyssey House, Ms Julie Babineau and the Chair of the Board, Mr Doug Snedden for their tireless work and passion in helping those who have fallen on hard times. Special recognition must also be acknowledged to the School Advisory Committee who have offered invaluable insight and wisdom to assist in the running of the school.

**Peter Reuben**  
Principal

## 2. Contextual Information about the School and characteristics of the student body

The Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) is the education unit at Odyssey House NSW, an adult drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation program located at Eagle Vale, in South Western Sydney. A second campus exists at Ingleburn. The PLC is registered by the NSW Department of Education and Communities, through the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA), under the Education Act 1990 and is a member of the Association of Independent Schools. The PLC delivers Stage 6 Life Skills syllabus, which provides course options for students with special education needs who can not access regular course outcomes.

Odyssey House NSW was founded in 1977 by Sydney businessman, Walter McGrath, following the death of his son from a heroin overdose. As a testament to his son, Mr McGrath committed himself to finding a program to help people suffering from problems with drug dependences.

The school has a closed enrolment policy; allowing only those who are referred to the program to attend. The Principal of the school is delegated authority by the Board of Odyssey House and reports to the School Advisory Committee as a sub-committee of the Board. There are, however, avenues for interested bodies and students to have input into the running of Odyssey House. There are scheduled Family Information Days throughout the year when family and loved ones are invited to lunch, attend seminars, and are given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.

Students are involved in satisfaction surveys throughout the year where students are actively encouraged to evaluate and make comment on all educational activities that they undertake and submit these to the teachers delivering the courses. Their responses are collated and analysed to monitor the effectiveness of the education service. A report on the findings is published bi-annually. These reports are analysed by staff to determine the need to make any adjustments to the program to improve its effectiveness.

All residents in the Odyssey House program are enrolled into the school and therefore share our vision, mission and values.

**Our vision:** A world free of addiction.

**Our mission:** To build safe and healthy communities by reducing the impact of addiction on individuals, families, carers and communities.

**Our values:**

**Professionalism** - We are committed to excellence by maintaining our professional boundaries and fulfilling responsibilities in an accountable, inclusive and objective

manner.

**Creativity** - We trust in our limitless potential.

**Respect** - We demonstrate consideration and regard for the feelings, beliefs and rights of others.

**Integrity** - We act with honesty and adhere to consistent moral and ethical values and principles through our personal and professional behaviours.

Our students have come from varying backgrounds and ethnicities, but all share the desire to have a fresh start. Many have not been equipped to cope with the school system and have developed associated problems. The Progressive Learning Centre affords these students another chance to effectively participate in the school system.



The Education Unit at Odyssey House (the PLC) provides a window of opportunity to address these needs. The PLC is dynamic and innovative in its approach and is accommodating of all students, as the traditional school system has not effectively catered for our students. It is a mandatory requirement that all students who are enrolled at the Progressive Learning Centre are aged 18 years and over and the program is completely residential.

All of our teaching programs are designed to build trust, enhance self-esteem, encourage self-expression and develop self-identity. Our aim is to promote the personal growth of each individual as they journey through their education so that they may flourish.

In our educational programming, implementation and evaluation we have married the objectives of Secondary Education with the aim of the Therapeutic Community. We have achieved this by developing specialised programs which meet the needs of our students and by providing these programs at the therapeutically optimum stage. The PLC plays a significant role in facilitating personal growth to effect this outcome.

While all courses address NESA syllabus outcomes they also provide the opportunity for the students to develop new skills and a greater sense of confidence.

In this way, the Progressive Learning Centre provides education for a group marginalised by society. During 2019, 354 people were admitted into the residential rehabilitation program for treatment which incorporates an educational component.

### Characteristics of the Student Body

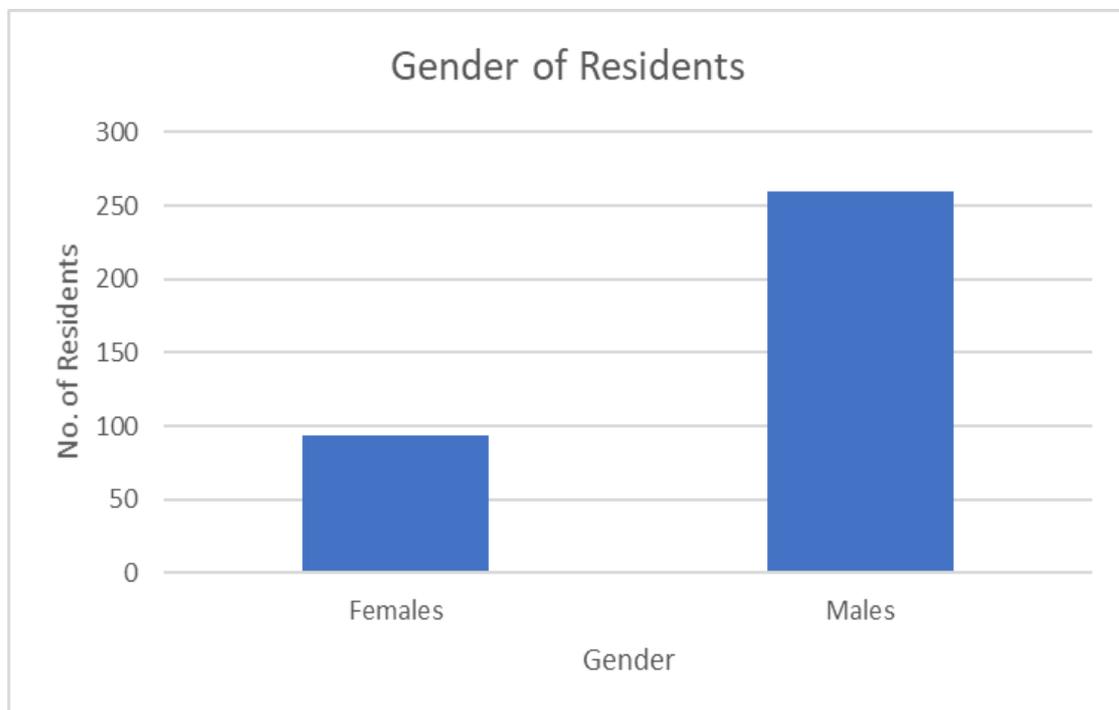
Students enter the program via the following means:

- Court stipulation
- Drug court stipulation (MERIT program – Magistrates Early Release into Treatment Program)
- Probation and Parole referral
- Family pressure (voluntary)
- Self referral (voluntary)

Students participate in an Assessment Phase where their suitability to engage in the Odyssey House program is determined. All students are accommodated by the PLC regardless of disability or medical condition.

### Gender

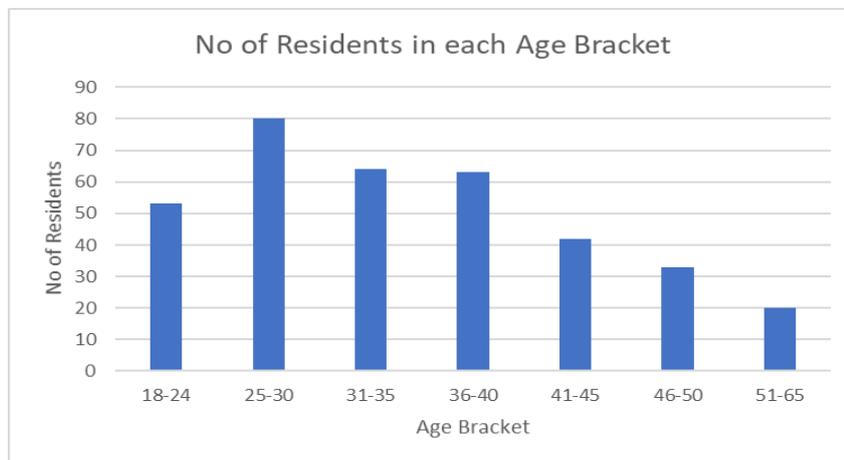
The composition of the 354 residents in the student body is demonstrated below with 94 Females and 260 males enrolled throughout the year, which is comprised of 26.6% female and 73.4% male.



## Age

The average age of the residents upon enrolment is 34.7 years of age, with the average of females being 34.4 years and males 34.9 years. This creates a vibrant community with students of varying backgrounds and ethnicity.

Age	No of Residents
18-24	53
25-30	80
31-35	64
36-40	63
41-45	42
46-50	33
51-65	19



Throughout 2019, 16 indigenous students were enrolled in the PLC which accounts for 4.5% of the total enrolments in that year.

Students' participation in the education program is determined by education assessment, their treatment plan, therapists' recommendations, case reviews, and self assessment. Continued enrolment in the education program is dependant upon the students' health and behaviour in the treatment program although, so students may also withdraw.

The mean time for a student to attend the PLC is 63.8 days and the median is 19 days.

### 3. Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

As Odyssey House PLC is registered for stage 6 and at this stage predominantly offers Life Skills courses, it does not have accreditation for presenting candidates for the Higher School Certificate. The PLC does not participate in the National Literacy and Numeracy testing (NAPLAN) as it is not appropriate for students at Odyssey House who are studying Stage 6 subjects.

On admission each resident is assessed over a four to six week period to ascertain their suitability for the program. This assessment includes a Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) to determine if they need remedial education. At the conclusion of this Assessment Phase a Treatment Plan is formulated and educational goals are set.

Every five weeks students complete an evaluation of each education course in which they have participated. These course evaluations measure the extent to which the PLC is successful in meeting its objectives using nine indicators. The quantitative and qualitative evaluations also evidence the benefits each resident gains from courses undertaken.

Consistent with the philosophy of a self help program, students are continually required to monitor their own educational progress which is documented in a variety of ways and at regular intervals.

Curriculum outcomes are set and assessed for each subject area taught on a five weekly basis. Certificates of Attainment are presented to students who meet these requirements.



On entry each student is assessed on a Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT 5). The WRAT-5 is a test of academic skills necessary for effective learning, communication and thinking. It is designed for individuals aged 5 to 85+ years of age and assists in the determination of learning ability and disability and in identifying the learning needs of students.

#### WRAT-5 Test Structure

The WRAT-5 provides derived scores and interpretive information for four subtests:

- Word Reading measures untimed letter identification and word recognition. The examinee reads aloud a list of letters/words
- Sentence Comprehension measures the ability to identify the meaning of words and to comprehend the ideas and information in a sentence using an untimed modified

close procedure. Each item requires the examinee to read (aloud or silently) a sentence with a word missing, and then say the word that best completes the sentence

- Spelling measures an individual's ability to write letters and words from dictation without a time limit
- Maths Computation measures an individual's ability to count, identify numbers, solve simple oral maths problems, and calculate written maths problems with a time limit. Problems are presented in a range of domains, including arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and advanced operations
- A Reading Composite score is created by combining the Word Reading and Sentence Comprehension standard scores.

It provides an evaluation of word reading, sentence comprehension, spelling, and mathematics skills and allows the generation of percentiles, school grade equivalencies, and descriptive classifications based on the standardised norms for English speaking people of particular age groups.

All students have a Individualised Learning Plan.

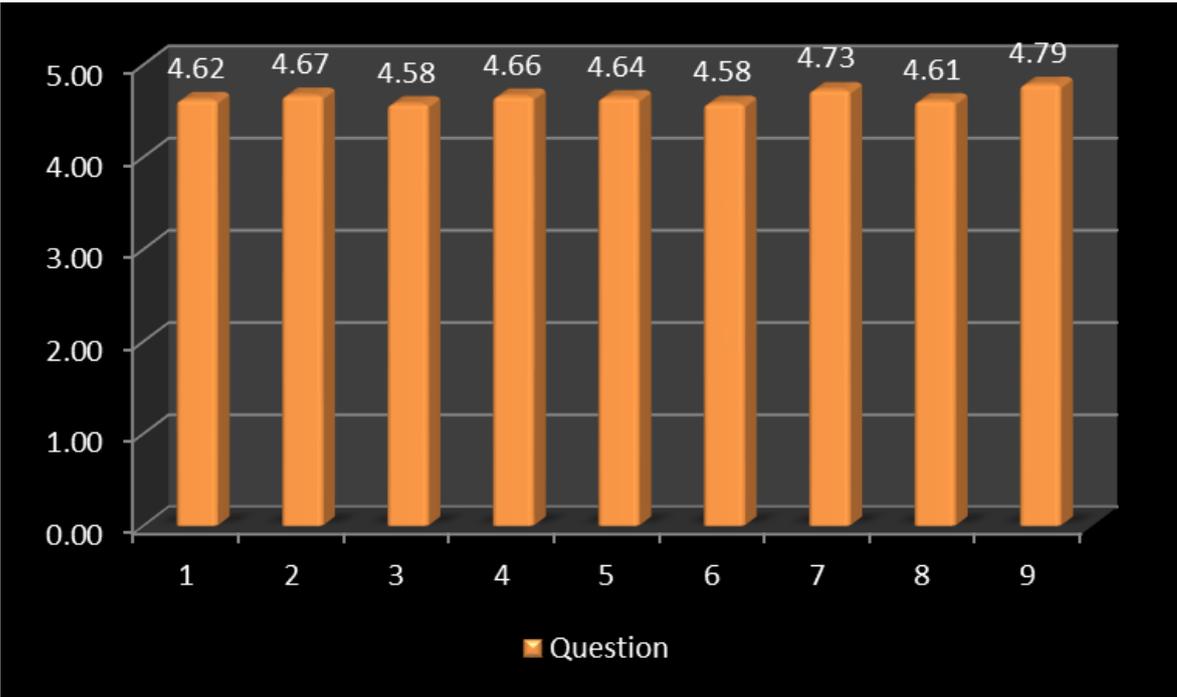
#### **4. Senior Secondary Outcomes (Student Achievement)**

The PLC does not have accreditation to award the Higher School Certificate. All classes are ungraded. We have no year 12 students. However, we continually evaluate our course outcomes to assist in evaluating the curriculum we deliver.

The course evaluations measure the extent to which the PLC is successful in meeting its objectives using the following indicators:

1. Develop students' knowledge, skills and attitudes
2. Provide students' with positive educational experiences
3. Develop students' skills in communicating, making decisions and/or solving problems
4. Improve students' ability to express themselves
5. Improve students' confidence in the task undertaken
6. Students feel better about themselves as a result of participating in the PLC course
7. Students receive positive role modelling from PLC staff
8. Students feel better equipped to stay in Odyssey House
9. Students rating the importance of the PLC courses in the program

**Effectiveness of PLC courses**



**Sample Number = 279**

Mean = 4.65

Highest rating = 4.79 (Qu.9)

Lowest rating = 4.58 (Qu.3&6)

Of the 279 student evaluations completed during this reporting period, it is rewarding to note that the PLC objective which received the highest rating was that students believe that the PLC classes play an important part in the overall Odyssey House Program (4.79 on a 5 point Likert scale) – the next highest objective was that students believed that the PLC staff provided positive role modelling for them (4.73). Both results have shown improvement from last year.

These results indicate that students place a high value on the importance of PLC classes and respect the staff members who deliver them.

## 5. Teacher Professional Learning, Accreditation and Qualifications

### Teacher Standards

There are six teachers employed in the PLC. Three of these teachers are employed full-time and three are employed on a part time basis.

Five of the teachers have teacher qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia. The one teacher who lacks formal teacher qualifications has a Masters degree in her subject area (Ceramics), works one day per week and has more than 30 years teaching experience at Odyssey House. The Principal has a Masters degree in Teaching. (Refer Theme 6 for Qualifications).

The staffing of the PLC has been very stable facilitating continuity in service delivery. The length of service of teaching staff at Odyssey House ranges from 1 – 30+ years.

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI_NOOSR) guidelines, or	5
Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines, or	1

### Professional Learning

All Odyssey House staff receive internal training each year. Expert external providers are engaged to deliver training which is pertinent to professionals working with substance misuse students. Odyssey House also hosts a one day forum each year during Drug Action Week where papers are presented on the latest research findings and programs operating in our field.



Description of Professional Learning Activity	No of Teachers Participating
Infection Control Training	6
Practical Fire Training	5
Food Handling	5
Senior First Aid – Resuscitation Certificate	5
Keeping Children and Young People Safe	5
Annual staff retreat / Strategic Plan Training Day / Therapeutic Community	4
Mental Health	3
English Syllabus	2
Risk Management	2
Proficient Teacher Orientation	1
HSC Marking Brief	1
Computer software training	1

## 6. Workforce Composition

There are six teaching staff employed within the Progressive Learning Centre. There are three full time teachers and three part time teachers (2x 0.8 and 0.2)

### Full-time Teachers

Principal: BSc, MChiro, MTeach, Senior First Aid Cert

TAS Teacher: Bachelor Design & Technology, Bachelor Education (Sec), Fitting & Machining Trade, Cert IV Workplace Assessment and Training, Senior First Aid Cert

Visual Arts Teacher: Bachelor Art (Humanities)/ Bachelor Teaching (Secondary), Cert. IV Workplace Assessment and Training, Senior First Aid Cert.

### Part-time teachers

Computer/Maths Teacher: Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Teaching, Certificate 1 – Computing; Senior First Aid Cert

English Teacher: Bachelor Primary Education (Honours), Diploma Community Services

Ceramics Teacher: Dip (Creative Arts), M.F.A

NB: There are no Indigenous teaching staff.

## **7. Student Attendance and Retention Rates and Post-School Destinations in Secondary Schools**

All classes are ungraded and students do not sit for any external examinations. Our students are in fulltime care and therefore attend the appropriate classes unless they are sick or have medical or legal appointments, such as court appearances, which they must attend. As such, management of non attendance is not an issue for our school. The average student attendance for 2019 was 99.4%

All students are on Individual Education Plans so that non-attendance due to court, medical appointments, illness, etc do not adversely affect the completion of their courses.

### **Post-School Destinations**

Odyssey House Progressive Learning Centre provides a Vocational Guidance Program for all students in Level 3 of the Odyssey House residential program. This course has played a significant role in assisting graduates of the program to gain employment. The course assists graduates to find employment which is suited to their personality type and will not be a relapse cue for them. This is extremely important for our students as if they gain employment which does not suit them, or places them at risk, they are likely to relapse. Some of our graduates enrol in training courses for the first time in their lives while others gain employment for the first time.

During 2019, 13 students graduated the Odyssey House Program.

## 8. Enrolment Policies

### Progressive Learning Centre Enrolment Policy



Reference number:	14.1
Version number:	3
Document owner:	PLC Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	The PLC Advisory Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
Date document approved:	May 2020
Next review date:	May 2021

#### 14.1.1 Scope

1. The Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) is the Education Unit at Odyssey House (OH) and provides educational experiences to foster the personal growth of residents' in the OH therapeutic community. PLC is registered by the NSW Department of Education and Communities through NESA (NSW Educational Standards Authority) and is a member of The Association of Independent Schools.

#### 14.1.2 Policy

2. The PLC has a closed enrolment policy which only allows admission through referral. As a rehabilitation service, only students 18 years old and over can be referred.
3. Enrolment at the PLC is mandatory for any individual participating in the OH residential rehabilitation program.
4. Enrolment is subject to interview at the Admissions and Intake Centre (AIC) at 199 Regent St, Redfern. As part of this process a member of the PLC staff will meet with individual students before offering a place.
5. Students enrolling at school for the first time must be 18 years of age or over at the time of enrolment.
6. Only limited courses are offered at the PLC with only Stage 6 non-examinable subjects accessible. Subject selection is the delegated responsibility of the School.
7. The School is committed to meeting the individual learning and other needs of its students. Accordingly:
  - the school will only accept and continue the enrolment of a student if it considers that its resources and facilities will meet their needs, with reasonable adjustments where necessary.

- the School reserves the right to refuse to enrol a student, if the School is not able to meet their needs, even with reasonable adjustments.
  - the School may also review any student's enrolment and may cancel the enrolment from the school if it is deemed that the School can no longer meet the student's needs.
8. The School has an absolute discretion in determining the weight of each of the factors it considers in determining whether to offer a place for the student.
  9. Continued enrolment at the School is dependent upon the student making satisfactory academic progress, attending consistently, and the student observing all behavioural codes of conduct and other requirements of OH Residential Services and the School which are applicable.

References:

## 9. Other School Policies

The aim of the Progressive Learning Centre is to provide educational and social experiences which foster personal growth, empowering students to effectively participate in the wider community.

## Student Welfare Policy

### Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Student Welfare Policy



Reference number:	14.4
Version number:	2
Document owner:	PLC Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	The PLC Advisory Committee and the Quality and Clinical Safety Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
Date document approved:	May 2020
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#### 14.4.1. General

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools (NSW) Manual requires that a school must have in place policies and procedures to ensure that it provides a 'safe and supportive environment' for all students.

#### 14.4.2. Support

The School aims to promote a learning environment where teachers and pupils are mutually supportive. Students and teachers should respect each other and not engage in conduct which undermines this mutual trust and support, and also respects the philosophy and ethics of the School. The School encourages consultation between all members of the School community in matters which affect them.

#### 14.4.3. Security

The School implements measures designed to promote the safety and wellbeing of students, particularly having regard to its professional judgement as to what is required and includes in its consideration such matters as:

- (a) appropriate levels of supervision including on-site and off-site activities;
- (b) security of buildings;
- (c) procedures in case of fire critical incidents ie.Odyssey House sites evacuation/lock down;
- (d) use of grounds and facilities;
- (e) travel on School-related activities; and

## Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Student Welfare Policy



- (f) other appropriate matters ie. Residential Services (where additional procedures need to be put in place e.g. supervision 24/7).

The implementation of these requirements and procedures is monitored for compliance on an ongoing basis in line with Odyssey House Residential Services policies and procedures.

### 14.4. 4. Supervision

Appropriate measures are taken by School staff to seek to ensure that all students are adequately cared for and supervised while undertaking both on-site and off-site activities, bearing in mind the type of activities and age of the students involved.

### 14.4.5. Conduct

The School has in place a Code of Conduct for staff and students which may be supplemented from time to time by specific rules and directives. The Code of Conduct includes such matters as:

- (a) the rights and responsibilities of students and staff within the School community including the rights and responsibilities of students and staff as members of the Odyssey House (OH) therapeutic community.
- (b) behaviour management;
- (c) the role of any School leadership system (or equivalent) in the School and the monitoring of that system; and
- (d) the management and reporting of serious incidents in accordance with the OH Incident Management System (IMS) .
- (e) The School has established and implemented appropriate behaviour management practices for students, consistent with the philosophy of the School and with other aspects of this policy.
- (f) The School has a student leadership system in place.

### 14.4.6. Complaints and Grievances

The School has in place processes for dealing with complaints and grievances raised by students These processes will incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

### 14.4.7. Pastoral Care

- (a) Students are made aware of, and have access to, appropriate pastoral care arrangements and access to, and use of, counselling with the School through OH Residential Services.
- (b) The School takes reasonable measures to identify students with special needs and provide them with an appropriate level of support to assist such students with their schooling with minimal disruption, taking into account the resources available.

## Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Student Welfare Policy



- (c) Students requiring health and/or medical services and support or medication will be assisted to access these in an appropriate manner in accordance with OH Residential Services policies and procedures.

### 14.4.8. Communication

- (a) The School provides both formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate communication between those with an interest in the student's education and wellbeing. This may include communications between some or all of the following: student, spouse or other significant family member of the student; teacher; counsellor; Principal; OH Residential Services staff, representative of an appropriate government, welfare, health or other authority.
- (b) All of the above policies and procedures will apply when the School has made arrangements for students of the School to undertake courses, subjects, tutoring or other education either on or off-site or where the School has made alternative residential arrangements for the purposes of their schooling.
- (c) Teachers, staff and any other persons involved in the provision of education or other services for students of the School who are undertaking courses, subjects, tutoring or other education either on or off-site which have been arranged by the School, or who are involved, at the request of the School, in OH Residential Services for the purposes of their schooling, will be subject to the requirements of relevant police screening.
- (d) Any student undertaking distance education, outside tutoring, or accessing accommodation arranged by the School but outside of the School will have equal access to counselling and other student welfare services as appropriate.
- (e) All of the above policies will be implemented in a manner that is appropriate to the School, its students and the OH Residential Services and with regard to the relevant legislative requirements that apply to the School and the students within its care.

## Discipline Policy

### Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Discipline Policy



Reference number:	14.3
Version number:	3
Document owner:	PLC Principal
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services
Document endorsement:	The PLC Advisory Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
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**14.3.1 Introduction** It is publicly recognised that a strength of independent schools is the ability to maintain discipline and deal with disciplinary matters quickly and effectively to ensure that a positive and productive learning environment is maintained for all students.

The students of the School in Odyssey House are over 18 years of age and reside within a Residential Rehabilitation program. The disciplinary action taken by the School will be the same as that used in the Odyssey House Residential Rehabilitation program.

#### 14.3.2 Procedural Fairness

The NSW Government has accepted the recommendations of Part 1 of the Review of Non-Government Schools (Grimshaw Review) which includes requiring schools to develop policies relating to discipline that includes suspension, expulsion and alternatives to corporal punishment (which must be precluded).

To be registered, it is a requirement of a non-government school to have disciplinary procedures that are based on principles of procedural fairness.

The following is an extract from the Odyssey House Residents Manual:

*Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities.*

*Procedural fairness refers to what is sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.*

*The 'hearing rule' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:*

- *know the allegations related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter.*
- *know the process by which the matter will be considered.*

## Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Discipline Policy



- *respond to the allegations.*
- *know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.*

*The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:*

- *impartiality in an investigation and decision making.*
- *an absence of bias by a decision-maker," and*

*The review mechanism adds to the fairness of the process."*

Odyssey House PLC holds the view that the right of review or appeal depends on the circumstances of each individual case and it is not a necessary component of providing procedural fairness.

### **14.3.3 Guidelines and potential consequences**

- Students are required to abide by the School's Rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the School.
- Where a student disregards rules, disobeys instructions or otherwise engages in conduct which causes or may cause harm, inconvenience or embarrassment to the School, staff members or other students, the students may be subject to disciplinary action.
- The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the School vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence. Where the allegation, if proved, may result in the student being asked to exit the School, the student and Odyssey House Residential Director will be informed of the allegations and procedural steps to be followed in dealing with the matter. In relation to all matters to be investigated, students will be informed of the nature of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- The penalties imposed vary according to the behaviour and the prior record of the student. At the lower end of the scale, an admonition or detention may be appropriate. At the upper end of the scale, the behaviour could result in suspension or expulsion from the OH Residential Program.

## Progressive Learning Centre (PLC) Discipline Policy



- The school prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the School.
- The School doesn't explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.
- The following are suggested options only to assist your school in determining when and how to apply processes that might result in the suspension or expulsion of a student, and what review and appeal rights, if any, are afforded to students in such situations.
- Where the offending behaviour is of such a nature that it may result in suspension or expulsion, the student will be:
  - (a) informed of the alleged infringement.
  - (b) informed as to who will make the decision on the penalty.
  - (c) informed of the procedures to be followed which will include an opportunity to have a parent or guardian present when responding to the allegations; and
  - (d) afforded a right of review or appeal.
- The Principal will reach a preliminary decision in relation to the allegation and any proposed penalty and advise the student of the view. The student would be advised that if they wish this preliminary decision to be reviewed, they may make application for a review to the Principal and submit any information they want to be considered during the review process. The Principal will then either confirm the preliminary decision as final decision or amend the preliminary decision based on the additional information provided; or

The Principal in consultation with the Director of Residential Services is the body that makes the final determination in relation to disciplinary matters that may result in suspension or expulsion.

## Policies for Complaints and Grievances Resolution

### Odyssey House Complaints and Grievances



Reference number:	14.5
Version number:	2
Document owner:	PLC Principal or Manager
Document approval:	The Director of Residential Services and Director of Community Services
Document endorsement:	The PLC Advisory Committee and the Quality and Clinical Safety Committee on behalf of the Board
Document location:	Media Drive/Intranet
Date document approved:	May 2020
Next review date:	May 2021

#### 14.5.1 SCOPE

Odyssey House has the following Procedure to deal with complaints and grievances of a general nature that may be held by students and clients.

Odyssey House recognises that students and clients may have a complaint or grievance over an Odyssey House related issue. This procedure provides a mechanism by which they can seek to have that complaint or grievance addressed. An outcome of this procedure may be that the complaint or grievance is found to be groundless.

Odyssey House will seek to ensure that any complaint or grievance is resolved at the earliest opportunity and in a timely manner and allow reasonable periods of time for discussion.

#### 14.5.2 COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE FOR ALLEGED REPORTABLE CONDUCT BY A MEMBER OF STAFF

a) Making Allegations - Allegations made by a student or other Odyssey House Community member against a member of staff for alleged reportable conduct:

- Should be made in writing to the Principal or Manager either by letter marked CONFIDENTIAL or in person. If inappropriate to contact the Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services of Odyssey House (OH) should be contacted
- Should be made confidentially and will be treated as confidential.
- Will be acknowledged in writing by the Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services or their delegate.

b) Definition of Reportable conduct is defined as follows: -

- any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material).
- any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; and
- any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child The Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services or

## Odyssey House Complaints and Grievances



- The Principal or Manager, the Director of Residential Services or their delegate will respond to the complainant in writing and keep them informed throughout the investigation and of the investigation final findings if appropriate.

### 14.5.3 GENERAL COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The student or client complaint or grievance must initially be dealt with as close to its source as possible, with graduated steps for further discussion and resolution at higher levels of authority, for example:

(a) Student or client grievances with other students and clients. If a student or client has a grievance with the way he/she has been dealt with by other students and clients. He/she may:

(i) ask his/her class teacher or therapist to help resolve the grievance.

(ii) if the complaint or grievance is not resolved, he/she may take the matter to the Principal or Manager.

(b) Student or client grievance with a staff member or Odyssey House process.

When a student or client has a grievance with a staff member or Odyssey House process, he/she may take the following step. Discuss the matter with the staff member or other trusted adult. If the student or client and trusted adult that was consulted believe it is appropriate, one or both may discuss the matter with the staff member who is the subject of the complaint.

(c) In the situation where the grievance/complaint is against the Principal or a Manager, the student or client should contact the Director of Residential Services of Odyssey House. In the event the matter remains unresolved then the process described below should be pursued.

(d) Any complaint or grievance which arises shall, where possible, be settled by discussion at its source between the student concerned and the responsible staff member e.g. Class Teacher or therapist. Should it be inappropriate for one of these staff members to be approached e.g. that person is the perceived source of the complaint or grievance then the student should approach the Principal or Manager or the Director of Residential Services, preferably in writing, as to the substance of the complaint or grievance, request a meeting with the Principal or Manager or the Director of Residential Services for bilateral discussions and state the remedy sought.

(e) If the student or client remains dissatisfied then it is acknowledged that they may be entitled to seek assistance from an external person or other appropriate authority. Should that action be taken by the student then Odyssey House may also seek external advice in respect of the matter.

References:

## 10. School Determined Priority Areas for Improvement

AREA	PRIORITIES
<b>Staff Development</b>	Opportunities for staff development were limited throughout 2019 due to two changes in school leadership and the limitations in collegiality as there is such a small number of teachers. Each first day of term will now be allocated to staff development.
<b>Teaching</b>	<p>A more thorough approach to individualised learning plans will be implemented with more testing to be completed.</p> <p>New initiatives are to be investigated incorporating more subjects (Food Technology, PDHPE and Work and the Community) and VET Courses (Business Cert II, Hospitality CertII and Horticulture Cert II).</p>
<b>Facilities</b>	Opening of more classrooms and planning a Wellness Centre with the prospect of introducing PDHPE and Food Technology.
<b>Resources</b>	Updated classrooms are being planned with the introduction of more diagnostic testing.
<b>Community Involvement</b>	Community involvement is limited due to the nature of the Progressive Learning Centre being a Rehabilitation Centre. Market days may become a possibility as well as the continued involvement of the school choir performing at aged care facilities and attending drama productions.

## **11. Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility**

Odyssey House is a Therapeutic Community where respect and responsibility are the cornerstones of Therapeutic Communities. The Odyssey House Therapeutic Community is structured in levels through which the students must progress. The movement through these levels is only possible by demonstrating respect for others and taking on increasing amounts of responsibility.

Each level through which the students progresses has a specific focus aimed at increasing respect and responsibility.

Students are responsible for many responsibilities within the organisation – cooking, cleaning, gardening, reception, provision of stationery and toiletries, supervision of visits, escorts for appointments; and in level 4 of the program they have a four month “commitment” where they are expected to voluntarily work for the program in respect for what the program has contributed to them. Thus respect and responsibility are concepts which are inherent in every aspect of the running of the program including the education unit.

## **12. Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction**

Parent satisfaction is not applicable to our situation as all students attending the PLC are over the age of 18 and are in residential rehabilitation. Odyssey House acts in loco parentis. However, regular feedback is given internally to medical and therapeutic staff of student/resident progress.

Student satisfaction however is paramount. As most of our students have engaged in rehabilitation whilst at Odyssey House, many of them have had limited previous schooling, therefore the education unit must not only meet their educational needs, but also their psychological needs in order for them to be willing to attend and participate. There are three main ways we determine student satisfaction:-

- reputation of the PLC
- written comments for Self Evaluations, Case reviews and PLC Course Evaluations
- the Odyssey House grievance procedure

The reputation of the PLC is overwhelmingly positive. Students refer other students to classes, give teachers suggestions regarding who they think would benefit from classes and make enquiries regarding their expected participation. Upon completing courses

students are awarded Certificates of Achievement at the weekly assembly and speak about the benefits they have gained from completing the course. Thus students hear about the benefits from participation directly from their peers. PowerPoint presentations are shown to the whole of Odyssey House staff and students During our General Meeting (whole school assembly) to show off their computer skills gained. Students from both Woodwork and Visual Arts will also often show their creative projects during this time and then be encouraged to give to their loved ones.

Teacher satisfaction is assessed in three ways:-

- Staff Appraisals
- Student Evaluation of Courses
- Supervision

All staff of the PLC complete a major annual appraisal. These appraisals convey each staff member's goals, achievements, inservice training and constructive criticisms which are then discussed with the Principal before final signing off by both parties.

Student evaluations of courses occur twice each term. Teachers collect and collate the statistical data from the evaluations which is presented in a bi-annual evaluation of the PLC's effectiveness. This allows staff to measure the ongoing effectiveness of their teaching and course content and contributes to teachers sense of achievement and satisfaction. All PLC staff attend supervision on an individual basis with the Principal in order to review aims, goals, resolve difficulties and ensure work satisfaction.

### 13. Summary Financial Information

## Odyssey House NSW

### Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income

For the year ended 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
Revenue	2	11,429,272	12,758,834
Other income	2	21,486	27,020
Investment income	2	68,762	91,117
Employee benefits expense	5	(8,094,398)	(7,893,771)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(329,854)	(378,793)
Operating expenses		(3,374,987)	(3,045,059)
Finance costs		(224)	(1,220)
<b>(Loss)/profit before tax</b>		<b>(279,943)</b>	<b>1,558,128</b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>(Loss)/profit for the year</b>		<b>(279,943)</b>	<b>1,558,128</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year</b>		<b>(279,943)</b>	<b>1,558,128</b>

**Odyssey House NSW**  
**Statement of financial position**  
As at 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	8	1,473,890	1,613,508
Trade and other receivables	9	348,406	107,686
Inventories	10	36,201	44,735
Financial assets	11	1,520,000	2,520,000
Other assets	12	62,707	64,264
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>3,441,204</u>	<u>4,350,193</u>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Other assets	12	143,991	244,684
Property, plant and equipment	13	2,874,333	2,741,760
Investment property	14	940,068	921,329
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<u>3,958,392</u>	<u>3,907,773</u>
<b>Total assets</b>		<u><u>7,399,596</u></u>	<u><u>8,257,966</u></u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	15	982,002	1,062,232
Other liabilities	3	246,576	717,668
Borrowings	16	-	15,778
Provisions	6	654,784	679,499
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<u>1,883,362</u>	<u>2,475,177</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Other liabilities	3	-	21,771
Provisions	6	232,351	197,192
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<u>232,351</u>	<u>218,963</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<u>2,115,713</u>	<u>2,694,140</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>5,283,883</u>	<u>5,563,826</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Contributed equity		15,000	15,000
Retained earnings		5,268,883	5,548,826
<b>Total equity</b>		<u>5,283,883</u>	<u>5,563,826</u>

#### **14. Publication Requirements**

Odyssey House Progressive Learning Centre, is committed to publicly disclose all information regarding education, services and activities (including the Annual Report) on the internet through the Odyssey House website ([www.odysseyhouse.com.au](http://www.odysseyhouse.com.au)).

Odyssey House PLC will provide this information, on request, to a person who is responsible for a student and is unable to access the internet.