

**Exodus Tutorial Centre, Gladstone**

(The Gladstone Tutorial Centre)

*an innovative and radical approach to literacy improvement across 15 schools.*

School: The Gladstone Tutorial Centre

District: Central Coast

Region: Fitzroy – Central West

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in the Early Phase of Learning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in the Middle Phase of Learning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in the Senior Phase of Learning
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in Inclusive Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in Leadership
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Excellence in Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award in Academic Excellence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Showcase Award for Industry or Community Partnerships

**OPTIONAL multimedia items:**

√ Multimedia items are not required electronically. A maximum of TWO items are to be supplied on ONE compact disc with the hard copy.

SIGNATURE/S OF PRINCIPAL/S

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

***To be completed by the Executive Director (Schools) after completion of the checklist:***

I support this submission and its entry in the Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools 2006. This submission meets the requirements set out in the Executive Director's Checklist.

**Signature of Executive Director (Schools)**

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_

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### ***Submission overview:***

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone is an innovative, intensive literacy program specifically designed for “**students at educational risk**” who have begun a cycle of failure with literacy in regular classrooms. With Positive Teaching and a program that has been specifically adapted for the middle phase learners in the Gladstone community these children return to their classes after 18 weeks with a different approach to learning.

### ***Description:***

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone provides an **innovative and accountable approach to education in a changing community**. As an off campus centre for Education Queensland, The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone provides an alternative model of schooling which **provides a second chance for children at educational risk**.

To attend the Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone 16 children at a time are withdrawn from across the 15 cluster schools from the Gladstone community for an entire semester. During this time these children are reengaged in learning reading, writing and spelling with the exclusion of all other key learning areas, sporting commitments, school camps and other distractions. To date the Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone has a proven 96% attendance record with students making the most of every learning day.

With individual tuition, small group work of 6 to 8 students with two teachers, a teacher aid and a barrage of volunteers these children leave the centre with a significant increase in reading and spelling age, confidence and self esteem which they successfully transfer to their learning when they return to their schools. It is this second chance for learning that students have had an increase of up to 58 months in reading age.

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone has supported the children of Gladstone since 2001. The Centre, using strategies from Macquarie University’s “MULTILIT” (Making Up for Lost Time in Literacy) Program has enabled 173 children, in 11 intakes, in the Gladstone area to make life-changing difference to their lives through their success in literacy and self esteem.

Commencing in January 2001 following negotiations and agreement between local businessman, Chris Tanner, Executive Director of Schools, David Manttan, and the fifteen principals of Gladstone state secondary and primary schools, the initiative was heavily influenced by an existing program at Ashfield in Sydney, The Exodus Foundation, which provides students with life alternatives that focus on reading, writing and spelling, enhanced self esteem and school and social survival skills using Macquarie University’s MULTILIT Program as the guide for the learning journey. (Appendix 1 *City steps towards literacy solution* & Appendix 2 *School to help kids with literacy deficit*) Until recently this centre of learning was known as **The Gladstone Tutorial Centre** but has recently formed a closer association with Exodus Tutorial Centre Ashfield, and has had a name change to **Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone**.

Physically the Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone is located at the Mission to Seafarers facilities in the Gladstone Marina Complex and services students from 12 state primary and 3 state high schools. It is an alternative education site that reengages learning for students providing a second chance for children at educational risk to experience literacy success.

The cluster of 15 state schools contributes two teachers (approximately \$160,000 yearly), while local partnerships provide for a teacher aide and program running costs (almost \$60,000 each year). Annual financial support has continued to grow with the involvement of Rotary Clubs, charitable organizations, and businesses and from principal benefactor, Mr Chris Tanner.

More than 25 trained volunteers from the Gladstone Community work weekly at the Centre as tutors and mentors for these children. (Appendix 4 Letter of Support from Chris Tanner)

### **Connection to QSE – 2010, Destination 2010 and/or Education and Training Reforms for the Future:**

The selection process identifies students with low literacy levels who without intervention are at significant **educational risk**. Poor literacy limits students’ opportunities, participation and benefits from schooling whilst improved literacy empowers **students to participate as equals**. (*QSE 2010 – A new deal on equity*).

Mean student improvement performance, of students attending the centre, in reading and overall literacy is well above state improvement on the State-wide Literacy tests and centre-based assessment shows significant improvement on a variety of measures. The **individualized** program approach caters not only for **student needs** in literacy but self-esteem, work ethics and self-management. (*Destination 2010 – Learning, Schools*)

The **explicit teaching of literacy, the focus on engagement of students and the use of benchmarking and centre-based assessment** form the basis of the eighteen week program designed to re-engage students and provide them with skills to access learning and enhance overall **achievement**. The program supports middle phase learners to **transition more effectively** from primary school to high school and enabling the students through improved literacy students are more readily **engage in the learning journey**. (ETRF – Middle Phase of Learning)

**The productive partnership between schools, community and business** in the Gladstone area has enabled the continuance of the program and contributes to the significant **improved learning outcomes** and enhanced futures choices for students attending the centre. (Destination 2010 – Learning, Schools)

The destination study indicates that a high percentage of the students are **engaging in post compulsory education** and are successfully accessing **further training and employment**. (ETRF)

## **Outcomes**

Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone is the only one of its kind in Queensland – targeting 10 to 15 year olds – and focuses on literacy for students who have missed out on success in this area. This innovative initiative not only provides rich literacy learning opportunities for young people, but also shows the centre as a leader in the delivery of a literacy program for children who have not successfully mastered reading and writing in the regular classroom.

Haydon Adams, a student from Intake 8 was quoted as saying that the program had given him a “**good start to life**” and reported that he would be beginning an apprenticeship in 2005. (Appendix 12 The Gladstone Observer 29.11.2004 *Haydon gains good start to working life*) Another student from the first intake, Anthony Paton, is now receiving High Achievements in English, Science and Shop B. His mother claims that The Gladstone Tutorial Centre has “taught Anthony and Brendan **life skills that they use now and will continue to use in the future**. Their future now appears much more positive.” Anthony’s younger brother also attended The Gladstone Tutorial Centre in 2004. (Appendix 17 Letter from Debra Paton 15.03.2005, Appendix 18 The Gladstone Observer 28.09.2004, *Centre receives praise*)

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone is **flexible in meeting the individual requirements** of the students. Each child is on an individual program. Set at an instructional level, and monitored carefully with positive teaching, each child is motivated to complete the required amount of work each day and **meet new challenges with confidence and focus on learning**. (Appendix 5 Page 3 *Positive Teaching*)

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone has supported students from 10 to 15 years of age. It provides opportunity to access education that is **consistent with each individual’s potential**. Each child is set a program that is aimed at his or her independent reading age. Focussing on reading and comprehension this program develops confidence and a ‘**can do**’ attitude. Michelle and Graeme Hawke believe that Exodus Tutorial Centre’s intervention program has enabled Ben to achieve a remarkable increase in his Year 7 Test results in all areas of literacy. They believe that Ben has started “back up the ladder” of learning. (Appendix 13 The Gladstone Observer 12.06.2004 *Learning comes easy for centre’s graduates*. Appendix 14 Letter from Michelle and Graeme Hawke parents from Intake 9, 18.03.2005)

With positive and specific teaching each child has the chance to learn in a safe and tolerant environment. Parents report that their children are now able to **handle classes more easily when they return to school and are keen to learn**. Eileen Radford claims that her son is now in high school, and “*has the confidence to embrace his language subjects with the ability to comprehend the tasks required of him. He is able to write confidently and make sense of what his work is about, skills that would have been difficult if not for his time spent and results achieved at Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone.*”

It is reported that these children can re-enter normal classes with a new found confidence and their **behaviour towards learning and life is more positive**. (Appendix 15 & 16 Andrew Sullivan 16.03.2005, Queensland Alumina Limited Community Newsletter Appendix 16 The Gladstone Observer, *Success Story*) Appendix 8 The Gladstone Observer. *Lance flies off for a passion* & Appendix 9 The Gladstone Observer, *Lance takes to the skies*)

**Worthwhile learning experiences** are offered to teachers, teacher aides, parents and volunteers. The Exodus Tutorial Centre offers **opportunities for the transfer of valuable teaching of literacy strategies** through mentoring, on-site and action learning and networking with the schools within the Gladstone District. With each new intake parents, volunteers and interested teachers are serviced with Pause Prompt and Praise. Class teachers of each intake are invited to attend the centre to view what is happening and share in the child’s ongoing progress.

**Effective communication** between the Gladstone district schools and Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone ensures that student progress remains **sustainable**. Paul Lowik, principal of Calliope State School reports that prior to attending The Gladstone Tutorial Centre “**students had lost faith in their ability to achieve and were resigning**

**themselves to a life filled with failures based upon their early trends in life.”** it is with the combined efforts and effective communication between the centre, the school and the parents that staff of Calliope State School “*witnessed a transformation in skills, abilities and application in each of the students who attended Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone*”. (Appendix 7 Calliope State School Letter of Support)

**Strong links with the wider Gladstone community** have been forged with the team of **25 volunteers** who are rostered to come and listen to the children read for an hour each day. Ten of whom have been with Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone since 2001. These volunteers are also trained in Pause Prompt and Praise, many retired teachers and professionals who take an active interest in the youth of today. Roydon Wood has now been a volunteer at Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone for 2 years and as an ex Deputy Principal he believes that this centre “*provides a climate where children can achieve.*” He states that it has been his “*pleasure and privilege to work as a volunteer at The Gladstone Tutorial Centre.*”

**Parents** are also made welcome and are an integral part of the reading process with Pause Prompt and Praise training. This training enables parents to use consistent language and strategies while listening to their child read at home. The parent training and involvement in the program ensures that parents are better equipped to help their child at home and often transfer this learning with their other children. Parents become more interested and supportive of their child’s reading skills and thus the child/parent relationship strengthens.

The value of the program has been identified by Tannum Sands State School and Gladstone Central State School as both schools have developed abridged versions of the MULTILit Program to support other students with literacy delay. By the **transferring** of teaching techniques such as Positive Teaching students returning to these schools will be **positively, encouraged to continue progressing** with the use of **shared techniques**.

Alan Whitfield, Principal of Gladstone Central State School, has noticed that when students return to schools they exhibit “**improved literacy skills**”, “**enhanced personal self-esteem and confidence**,” “a belief by students that they have a part to play in the future” and a “positive attitude towards school and learning that has led to **further success at school and in employment opportunities**.” (Appendix 1 Letter of Support Gladstone Central State School)

Feedback from parents, teachers, children and the participating volunteers demonstrates the life changing difference this program has made for these children. Rosemary Jensen, Guidance Officer, believes that the most notable improvement when the children returned to the classroom was “*their confidence levels and their attitude towards reading and learning overall. In the classroom, these students displayed more independence in their ability to complete class work and they were more willing to “have a go” at tasks they would have previously avoided.*” (Appendix 6 Letter of Support Rosemarie Jensen Guidance Officer and past Teacher of Tannum Sands State School)

**Quality partnerships** within Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone management team reflect a **highly committed** group of people who are working towards a common goal. With the continued support of Chris Tanner, Education Queensland, **competent and dedicated teachers** and the Gladstone community Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone will continue to enable students with low level literacy skills improve their reading and comprehension skills to a level from which they can go on to complete their secondary education and be **successfully employed in the “world of work”**. Improved literacy not only enables the students to engage academically but also improves self worth and confidence, an **essential combination for life**. (Appendix 10 The Gladstone Observer, *Patrick changes life*)

### **Evidence:**

Achieving rates of improvement in reading 41% higher than the State Mean in the Year 5 and Year 7 Reading Tests has enabled these children to return successfully to classes and their school.

Students who have attended Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone have improved at a rate **26.2% higher in literacy** and **40.7% higher in reading** than the overall State mean improvement from Year 5 to 7 on the State-wide Literacy Tests.

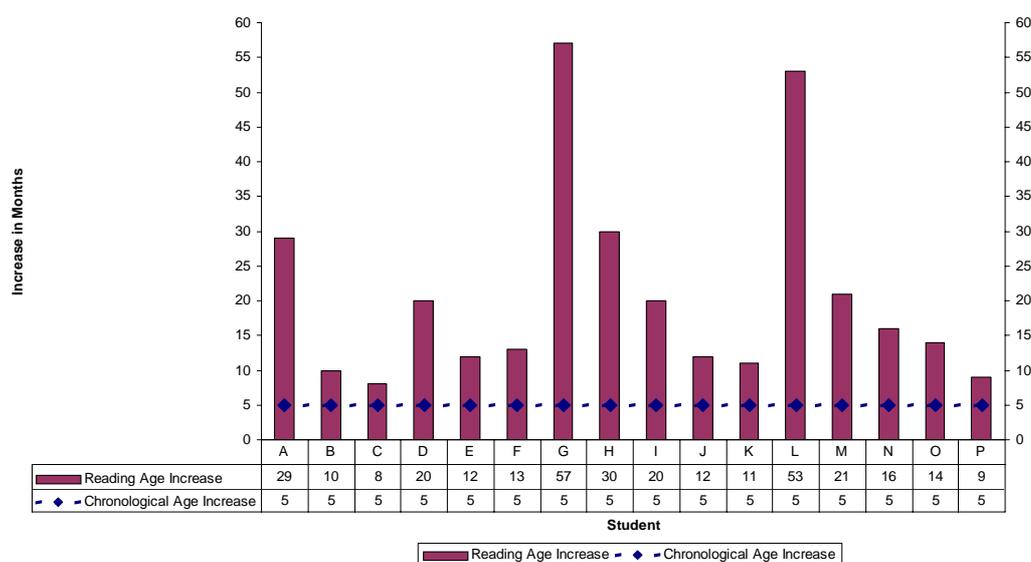
**Comparison Mean Improvement - Years 5-7 on Statewide Literacy Tests  
(Intake 1-7)**

	Reading	Spelling	Literacy Overall
State Mean Improvement	74.5	78.75	76.25
Gladstone Tutorial Centre Mean Improvement	104.8	98.4	96.25
Gladstone Tutorial Centre Percentage Difference	40.7%	25.0%	26.2%

The **integrity** of the program and the results are continually monitored by Macquarie University Special Education Centre (MUSEC) and the results have verified the **effectiveness** of Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone’s program. In a newspaper article Margrit Frischneck and Glenys O’Reilly from MUSEC are reported to have said “The centre is improving with each intake, and has achieved excellent results.

Systematic assessment and progression throughout the 18 weeks enables the level of work to be targeted correctly. Due to the individualised and specific nature of the program at Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone there is a **proven increase in the ability to read accurately, fluently and understand what has been read**. The graph below illustrates individual student improvement in reading age accuracy using the Neale Reading Analysis (Version 3) over the 18 week program for Intake 8.

**Chronological Age Increase compared to Reading Age Increase- Intake 8 (Semester 2 ,2004)**



For example student G has achieved a remarkable 57 month increase in reading age, while student L has achieved a 53 month increase. The average reading age increase with this intake is 20.9 months over the 18 week period.

A destination survey was conducted of past students of Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone. 98.4 % of students completed Year 10 or above, being 1.5% higher than the Years 8-10 cluster retention rate.

**Destination Survey - Students attending the Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone (Commence Year 11 in 2004-06)**

Fulltime Employment / Apprenticeships	45.9%
Enrolled in Senior School / School Based Apprenticeships	52.5%
Students failing to complete Year 10	1.6%
Unemployed but completed Year 10	3.2%

Such positive results, coupled with improved self esteem and motivation, has provided the students from the Exodus Tutorial Centre with a much wider range of future educational, employment and life opportunities. Lance Taylor, Patrick Zimmerlie, Haydon Adams and Andrew Sullivan as reported in the Gladstone Observer are just a few of the students who believe that they would not have achieved success in the world of work without the positive support in literacy from the Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone (formerly known as The Gladstone Tutorial Centre) Appendices 8,9,10,12,15

The Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone is committed to providing an **inclusive curriculum** that meets the needs of at risk students in the Gladstone Community. By **empowering** these children with **strong self worth** and basic literacy skills, these children develop a “can do” attitude to education and life enabling them to experience continued success and an **enhanced choice** of quality life pathways.

The number and range of **personnel involved in this project** has been critical to the success of Exodus Tutorial Centre Gladstone.

Chris Tanner, President

David Manttan, Vice President and Education Queensland, Executive Director (Schools)

Jenny Bishop, Treasurer

Pam Tanner, Secretary

Alan Whitfield, Education Queensland, Principal, Gladstone Central State School

Leanne Ibell, Education Queensland, Principal, Gladstone South State School

Kayci Kirk, Education Queensland, Teacher in Charge, Exodus Tutorial Centre, Gladstone

Joan Whirisky, Education Queensland, Senior Teacher, Exodus Tutorial Centre, Gladstone

Jenny Kirchner, Education Queensland, Teacher Aide, Exodus Tutorial Centre, Gladstone

**Additional stakeholders and supporters:**

Principals and school communities of the following schools:

Clinton State School

Calliope State School

Gladstone West State School

Gladstone South State School

Gladstone Central State School

Kin Kora State School

Boyne Island State School

Tannum Sands State School

Yarwun State School

Benaraby State School

Mt Larcom State School

Toolooa State High School

Gladstone State High School

Tannum Sands State High School

Rosella Park School

The Rotary Clubs of Gladstone, Dymock’s Literacy Foundation, Cherish the Children Patrick Rafter Foundation, National Australia Bank, NRG Gladstone Operating Services, Think Office Technology, Comalco, Coal Recovery Trust Fund, Goldings, Cement Australia, Gladstone City Council, Central Queensland Ports Authority, Queensland Alumina Limited, Sotherton’s Business Centre, Zonta Club, Thiess Pty Ltd