

# ***The Karayuna Learning Centre***

“The Path to Tomorrow”



## **Handbook**

This is a working document and therefore changes may be made without notice and will be considered to be as valid as any other section of the handbook.

Updated Version: December 2018

# ***The Karayuna Learning Centre***

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# ***The Karayuna Learning Centre***

## **1. Background, Purpose and Location**

### **1.1. Background**

*The Karayuna Learning Centre* is a support service available for students who are on long suspension. These students have been referred by their home school as likely to benefit from a structured program to assist their successful return to school as soon as possible.

To comply with the *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Procedures* schools need to provide **a program of study and relevant resources** for the duration of the suspension, even if the student is successful in entering *The Karayuna Learning Centre* program.

*The Karayuna Learning Centre* initiative has the capacity to strengthen the partnership between parents/carers and schools. It is especially important in building parent recognition of their responsibility for taking an active role in modifying the inappropriate behaviour of their child. Therefore for the intervention to be successful a collaborative approach will be adopted involving the home school, the parents, the student and the centre.

### **1.2. Purpose**

1. form part of a range of behaviour services for students who are disruptive (school discipline plans, behaviour team support to schools, withdrawal programs).
2. increase the capacity of schools to deal successfully with disruptive students
3. assist students to make a successful re-entry to schooling.

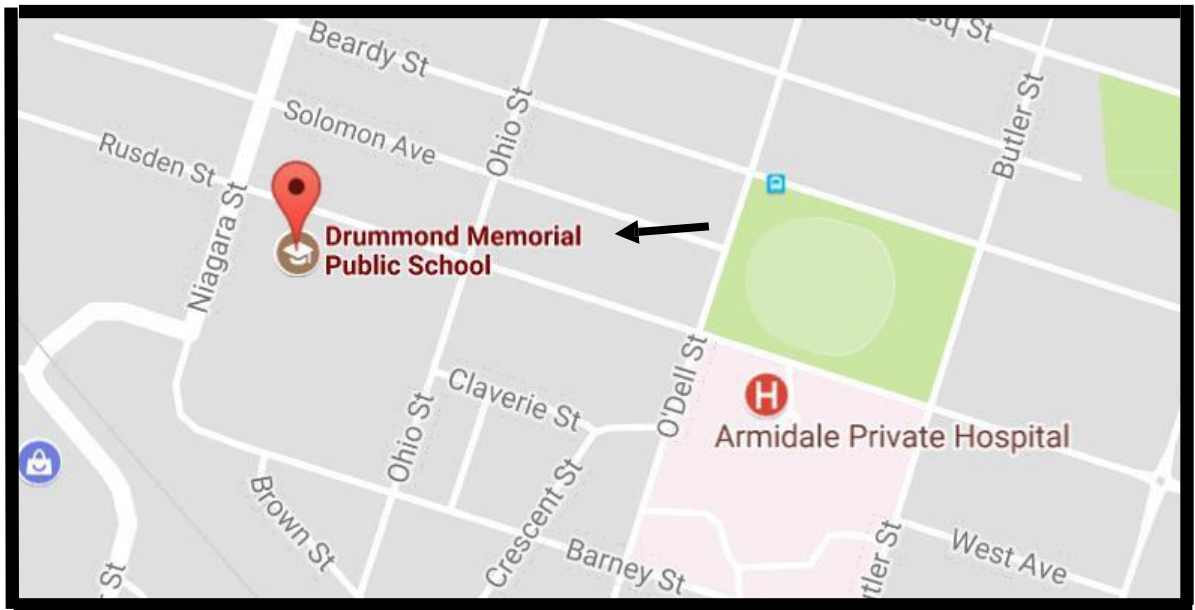
### **1.3. Goals**

The goals of the centre will be:

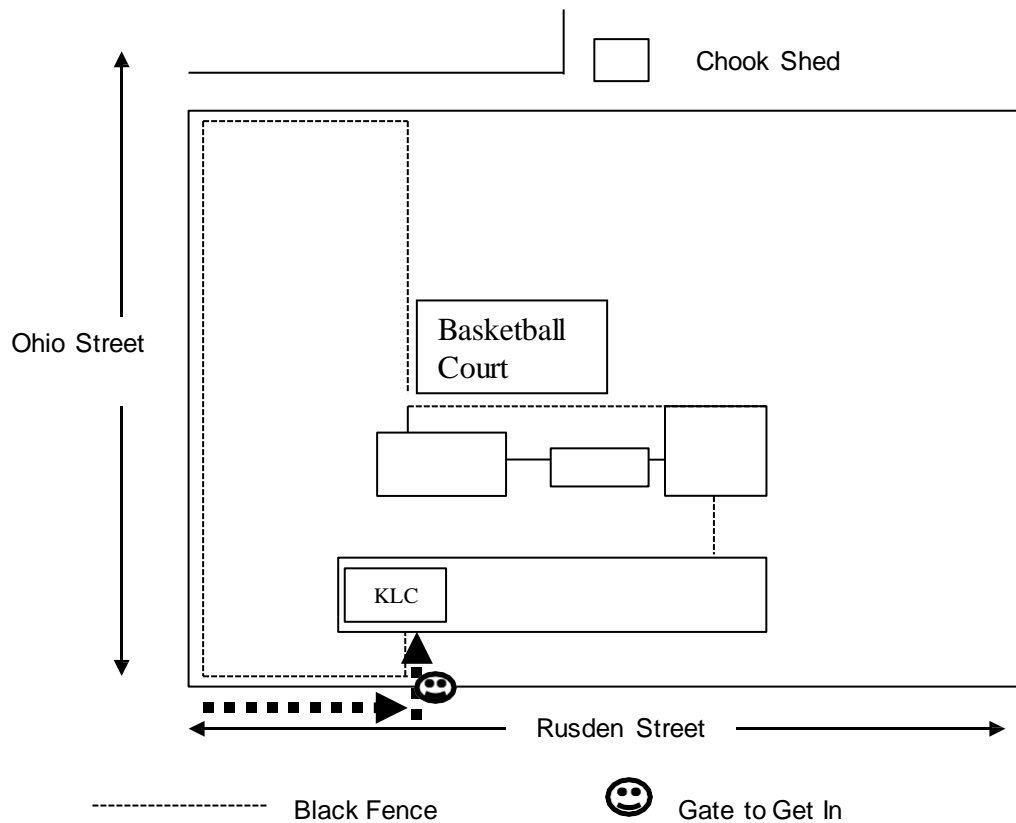
- to assist students to reflect on and understand their behaviour and its consequences
- to reinforce and develop appropriate attitudes and behaviours
- to build capacity and understanding in students on how to re-engage at school,
- re-integrate to positive work habits and prevent recurrence of the inappropriate behaviours
- to provide skills development opportunities and support for the parents/caregivers of the students

#### 1.4. Location:

In the grounds of Drummond Memorial Public School, Rusden Street, Armidale 2350. Enter from the Rusden Street.



#### To Enter:



## **2. Eligible Students, Management Committee and Structure and Structure of the Day**

### **2.1 Eligible Students**

Students who are experiencing their first long suspension in the calendar year from Years 5 to 10 are the primary target group. Students on their first long suspension will have priority over other suspended students. The starting day of a student's placement will be negotiated with the Head Teacher of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* and will depend on vacancies, the students already accessing the centre and the outcome of any risk assessments.

Students who:

- have been placed on long suspension
- are assessed by the school as having the potential to benefit from an intervention to successfully return them to school following a long suspension.

If placements exist, students on a short term suspension will be considered.

Preferred Criteria for eligible students includes;

- Resilience - physical and emotional
- Parent/caregiver support
- Willingness to participate and work towards reintegration
- Reflective practice
- Appointment of a suitable mentor from the home school before the student enters *The Karayuna Learning Centre*

Feeder schools eligible to apply on behalf of students for placement at *The Karayuna Learning Centre* include all schools primary and secondary within the outer boundary being encompassed by Guyra Central School, Walcha Central School, and Uralla Central School. Transport is the responsibility of parents or carers.

### **2.2 The Karayuna Learning Centre Management Committee**

The management committee will be chaired by the Principal responsible for the site on which *The Karayuna Learning Centre* is located. The Head Teacher, the School Counsellor on site, a member of the community, Learning and Wellbeing Advisor and the Learning and Wellbeing Officer will constitute the membership of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* Management Committee.

### **2.3 Management Structure**

*The Karayuna Learning Centre* is the ultimate responsibility of the Principal responsible for the site on which it is located. As site manager under Work Health and Safety Policy, the Principal retains the right to make the final decision in relation to a nominated student's placement.

However, the operational guidelines and *The Karayuna Learning Centre's* policies and all other supporting documentation require the approval of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* Management Committee prior to implementation.

The placement of students in *The Karayuna Learning Centre* will be through consultation between the centre's Principal and Head Teacher.

### **2.4. General Operating Principles**

- Students who attend the centres remain the responsibility of the home school and strong links will be maintained throughout the period in the suspension centre.
- The centre and its expectations will mirror the home school and its expectations.
- The length of stay will be no more than twenty days.

- Students will be referred back to their home school principal if their behaviour is such that it threatens the safety of other students, or is seriously disruptive whilst they are in the centre.

## 2.5 Structure of the day

- The student will be linked to a mentor teacher while in the suspension centre program. The mentor teacher will support the student's return to school.
- Students returning to school after suspension will be supported through the continuum of available support services including mentoring, support teacher behaviour and school counsellors.

## 2.6 Structure of the day

The centre is open from **9.30am** until **1.00pm** each day of the week.

Students from outlying schools will need to make their own travel arrangements re' buses etc provide lunch and morning tea. Prior to 9.30 am and after 1.00 pm students will be in the care of their parents/carers.

Whilst attending *The Karayuna Learning Centre* students will complete the work package provided by their home school and participate in an appropriate behaviour program.

### Staff Overview:

**Staffing:** Head Teacher (Tuesday-Friday) – Heidi Waters  
Teacher (Monday)  
SLSO – Nina Sands

|                   | MOND     | TUES     | WED      | THUR     | FRI      |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 9.30 AM - 1.00 PM | TEACHING | TEACHING | TEACHING | TEACHING | TEACHING |
| 1.00 PM - 3.30 PM |          |          |          |          |          |

KEY Teaching Hours

Administration/School Programs

## Weekly Overview:

Please find following an overview of what learning occurs at the Karayuna Learning Centre. Please note that the timetable must always be flexible to cater to the individual needs of students.

| TIME              | ACTIVITY   |
|-------------------|--|
| Before 9.30am     | <b>Breakfast</b><br><b>Games</b><br><b>Computer work</b><br><b>Reading a book</b><br><b>General discussion</b>   |
| 9.30am – 10.00am  | <b>Morning Meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reflection of the day before</li><li>- Variation of routine</li><li>- Feelings about today and general overall wellbeing</li><li>- What we are doing for the day – Lesson Overview</li><li>- Short brain teaser/activity/UNO/Trivial Pursuit/Monopoly</li></ul> |
| 10.00am – 11.00am | <b>Social and Behavioural Programs</b>   |
| 11.00am-11.30am   | <b>RECESS</b>  |
| 11.30am – 12.30pm | <b>Individual Academic Programs</b>  |
| 12.30pm – 1.00pm  | <b>Interest Activities</b> including – sport, art, D&T etc   |

### **3. Special Programs Implemented at the Karayuna Learning Centre**

#### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED AT THE KARAYUNA LEARNING CENTRE**

##### **3.1 Re-Engagement Program**

During 2019 the Karayuna Learning Centre will again provide this service to all Primary and High schools in our area. The centre continues to be committed to a pro-active early intervention strategy that will support schools in dealing with students at risk of being totally disengaged with education and consequently being suspended. The program is a positive response to the philosophy of Local Schools and Local Decisions.

##### ***Implementation of this program does not start until Term 2.***

There will be two forms of support available to schools:

- ✓ Head Teachers coming out to the schools and working with individuals and/or groups of students.
- ✓ Students actually coming to the centre for up to three weeks in the mornings for intensive programs and then attending their home school/or going home in the afternoon. This strategy is flexible and will be negotiated between the school, centre and parents.

##### **Outcomes**

It is anticipated that students who are involved in this program will:

- ✓ Engage and take responsibility as active learners
- ✓ Think critically
- ✓ Reflect on and understand their behaviour and its consequences
- ✓ Communicate effectively
- ✓ Participate in diverse environments.
- ✓ Utilise information literacy skills.
- ✓ Develop positive attitudes towards their schooling

##### **Who qualifies?**

Students who:

- ✓ Are currently enrolled in the school that is applying for a placement
- ✓ Have been attending for at least 2 weeks
- ✓ Are in Year 5 up to Year 9
- ✓ Are currently attending school on a regular basis
- ✓ May have had multiple short suspensions
- ✓ Would readily participate in such a program

##### **What Will The Students Be Doing ?**

- ✓ Social and Behavioural Programs
- ✓ Reflection Work – looking at behaviours and consequences of this.
- ✓ Literacy and Numeracy Lessons – which will need to be provided by their class teacher/s.

##### **How Do I Get a Student Involved?**

- ✓ Ring the Principal at DMPS to clarify if the student qualifies for this program and to see if there is a place available
- ✓ Complete application form and submit to the Karayuna Learning Centre, with their Risk assessment (if necessary) and their Part Time Attendance (PTA) application form if the student is not returning to school at 1pm.
- ✓ The home school needs to have discussed application with their Learning Support Team, parent/carer of the student and District Office – re the PTA application.
- ✓ Once the application has been submitted, the Karayuna Learning Centre staff will contact the school and parents with the start date.
- ✓ After the placement, the Head Teacher will prepare a report and discuss it with the school Learning Support Team, and/or a school executive.



- ✓ If you would prefer the student to complete program at the home school, the appropriate box needs to be ticked and parent's signature is still required. Teacher and school will negotiate program.

***IMPORTANT INFORMATION:***

- STUDENTS COMPLETING THIS PROGRAM MUST HAVE AN APPLICATION FOR PART-TIME EXEMPTION FORM FILLED OUT AND SIGNED OFF BY THE DIRECTOR.
- Please note students who are on a suspension cannot go straight into the Re-engagement program. They need to have returned to school for a period of time.
- Students can only be placed on this program twice during one year.
- Suspended students have precedence over re-engaged students.
- If a student has started a placement and then a suspended application is submitted - The Re-engagement student may stay for up to 5 days, then they will be asked to return to their home school. The Karayuna staff will inform the home school when this occurs and the date the student is expected to return to their home school.
- Newly enrolled students must have attended their new school /classes for at least 2 weeks before being eligible to participate in the Re-engagement program.

## **3.2 Gemiga Yarning**

### **Philosophy**

Gemiga Yarning's mission is to support Aboriginal girls to connect with their identity, culture, and community.

Its goal is to work with girls to form a strong sense of self, empowerment through cultural knowledge and their place within their Aboriginal family. Gemiga Yarning provides guidance, mentoring, information and skills to be a *STRONG INDEPENDENT ABORIGINAL WOMAN* in this modern world.

All Aboriginal girls in our community must have the opportunity to be heard and influence decision making, and by doing this are given the opportunity to develop their leadership and career capacity to be leaders of change into the future.

Gemiga Yarning believes that girls strong in their Aboriginal identity, living true to the lore of their people can and will be our future leaders.

### **Gemiga Yarning Aims:**

- Improve outcomes for our Aboriginal girls and provide them with the skills and tools needed to determine their own future, and continue building a strong and diverse Aboriginal culture for future generations.
- To increase the Aboriginal girl's self-esteem by giving them a strong cultural identity, which in turn will allow them to be well-placed to make social connections with others and develop a sense of belonging to their community.
- To provide Aboriginal girls an opportunity to connect with culture which can then be a vehicle for enhancing self-esteem, identity and belonging, which in turn can help build their resilience.
- To provide opportunities for the Aboriginal girl's to explore their family history, community connections, their mob and language.
- To facilitate a connection to Aboriginal women in the local community who are successfully employed in a wide variety of career opportunities to aspire the girls in their own career aspirations.
- To communicate the appropriate standards of behaviour, ethics and achievement necessary to carry your Aboriginal identity within the wider community.

### **Why is Gemiga Yarning unique?**

- It is facilitated by a strong Aboriginal women.
- It is a fully supported and Aboriginal-led community based program.
- It is locally written for the local community, including permission to use language.
- It uses local Aboriginal people from our community.
- It includes sustainable initiatives that meaningfully engage with our girls.
- It empowers them to reach their true leadership potential.
- It provides an opportunity for the Aboriginal girls to have a say in what is taught to them.

The Aboriginal girls are engaged from the very beginning of this program to ensure that they have a say and that the program is specific to that group of students at that school. This ensures that the girls have the opportunity to be heard and influence decision making, and by doing so provide opportunities to develop their leadership capacity. Genuinely listening to the girls, giving careful consideration to their views and involving them in decisions that affect their lives demonstrates our respect for them as valued members, and future leaders, of our communities. Asking the girls what they want and involving them in decision-making processes ensures the program is relevant to them and makes it more likely for them to be involved and have a positive experience.

Overall Gemiga Yarning is a program that supports the development of culturally proficient, respectful and proud Aboriginal girls, which in turn will positively contribute to their overall wellbeing. It will

provide the girls with the skills and tools needed to determine their own future, and continue building a strong and diverse Aboriginal culture for future generations.

### ***Gemiga Yarning Topics:***

- "Nyanga ndaga wang-n – Introduction about what the program is about
- Identity
- Identity through Art
- Self-Image
- The Flag (Our Flag)
- Dreaming
- Dance
- Community Connect
- White Orche Celebration

### **3.3 Hip Hop with Nate**

#### ***Why have Hip Hop at the Centre***

Hip hop is a global cultural communication style including the pillars of music, art and dance. Born in urban American environments, the arts of DJing, MCing, graffiti, breakdancing, slam poetry, beatbox and beatmaking have become worldwide ways young people and adults use to express their thoughts, feelings, ideas, values, knowledge and wisdom in urban, rural, suburban and other environments.

Today, youth and hip hop are tied up together around the world as an avenue for social change that can build power, ability and inspiration. It is hoped this program will help students:

- Reclaiming place through breakdancing
- Expressing themselves through song
- Making noise and beats with Nate
- Speaking out through song writing.

The act of creating conscious hip hop can be empowering, engaging and enlightening to our students. Hip hop music can teach them about the politics that affect them, the cultures they are part of and the other elements of society they live in, and engaging young people in music making can be a powerful way to encourage that to happen.

Here at the Karayuna Learning Centre, we have chosen this path due to three main reasons.

***Opportunities*** — One of the most powerful parts of hip hop is that young people can engage in its many elements without seeking permission from adults. However, when adults are allies with youth, they can foster hip hop throughout communities. More than simply playing a song, hip hop can be a spine for teaching, empowering, engaging and immersing children and youth in the realities of society.

***Technology*** — Hip hop can be hold an organic, natural basis that centers on poetry, art, dance and emotion. It can also be moved along through tech-driven, synthetic ways that infuse electronic beats, voice modification and computerized instrumentals into all aspects of the culture. Providing access to technology can allow young people to choose whether they are organic or synthetic, or some mix of both. Tech can also allow children and youth to share hip hop culture globally, too.

***Exposure*** — Hip hop is worldwide today. People speaking every language in almost every nation attach to some part of hip hop, creating, consuming and promoting social change at every turn. Exposure to diverse hip hop can engage young people in transnational, globalized culture without ever leaving their community, allowing them to infuse worldwide perspectives into places where people can't or don't ever leave.

Nate Weatherall is a renowned hip hop artists who we will be coming each week for two hours to work with the students at the centre.

### **3.4 Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden Partnership**

The partnership involves collaborating with members of Armidale's Aboriginal community to develop a garden of vegetables, flowers, herbs, bush foods, medicinal plants, and native plants and shrubs. At heart, this project is about using the fertile soils of a collaborative community garden to nourish connections: between university and community, between research and practice, between cultures, between species, between youth and Elders, between people and food production, between traditional and academic knowledge's, and between localised action and global change.

#### ***Vision***

Our vision for the garden is that it will be a place where people can come together to grow and harvest fresh fruit, vegetables, herbs, flowers, bush foods and native plants; connect with culture and community; share stories; celebrate Aboriginal science, knowledge's and culture; and promote health and wellbeing. This is a community-driven grassroots initiative, open to all members of Armidale's diverse community.

#### ***Link to The Karayuna Learning Centre Students***

Like many communities, there are continued and increasing concerns rising about issues like teen depression, drug use, dis-engagement from school, criminal activity and a general low morale of our youth. Another major concern is the lack of respect for others in the community and for themselves and the land around them.

This garden could become a model which displays the impact of how a community garden can enrich the local community's culture and youth engagement.

It is hoped that the involvement of the Karayuna Learning Centre will demonstrate engaged young teenagers with an increased responsibility and positive identity in the community. The vision is for the program to grow into a place where the students can learn and talk to Indigenous community people about their culture and belonging.

The program hopes to:

- build the health and well-being of students and make the community garden stronger,
- allow students take pride and joy in telling the story of "their" involvement in the garden.
- provide students the opportunity to know where their food comes from and understand the cultural aspect,
- increasing care for the land and their environment
- allow people to come together around common goals and shared work
- empower students by the tending and cultivation process
- allow students to become a part of contributing to places of culture and well-being,
- engage students and teachers to spend more time in an outdoor classroom space.
- decrease racial discrimination and show that the students are contributing to their local community in a positive manner,
- increase neighbourhood engagement, when others see the students working in the garden they may feel more inclined to come over and help and talk to the students,

Overall it is hoped that the whole experience will strength the students link to their community and give them a sense of ownership, belonging, connectedness, and safety. The students will be more connected to their schools and communities, understand their value and contribution, and increase their own skill sets and experience.

#### ***What Students Will Do***

In the gardening process, students will be involved in the initial planning and design, preparation of the land, planting the seedlings, and cultivating the gardens. This includes designing the space and choosing what's planted. Through sweat and determination, students will be able to literally see the fruit of their labour.

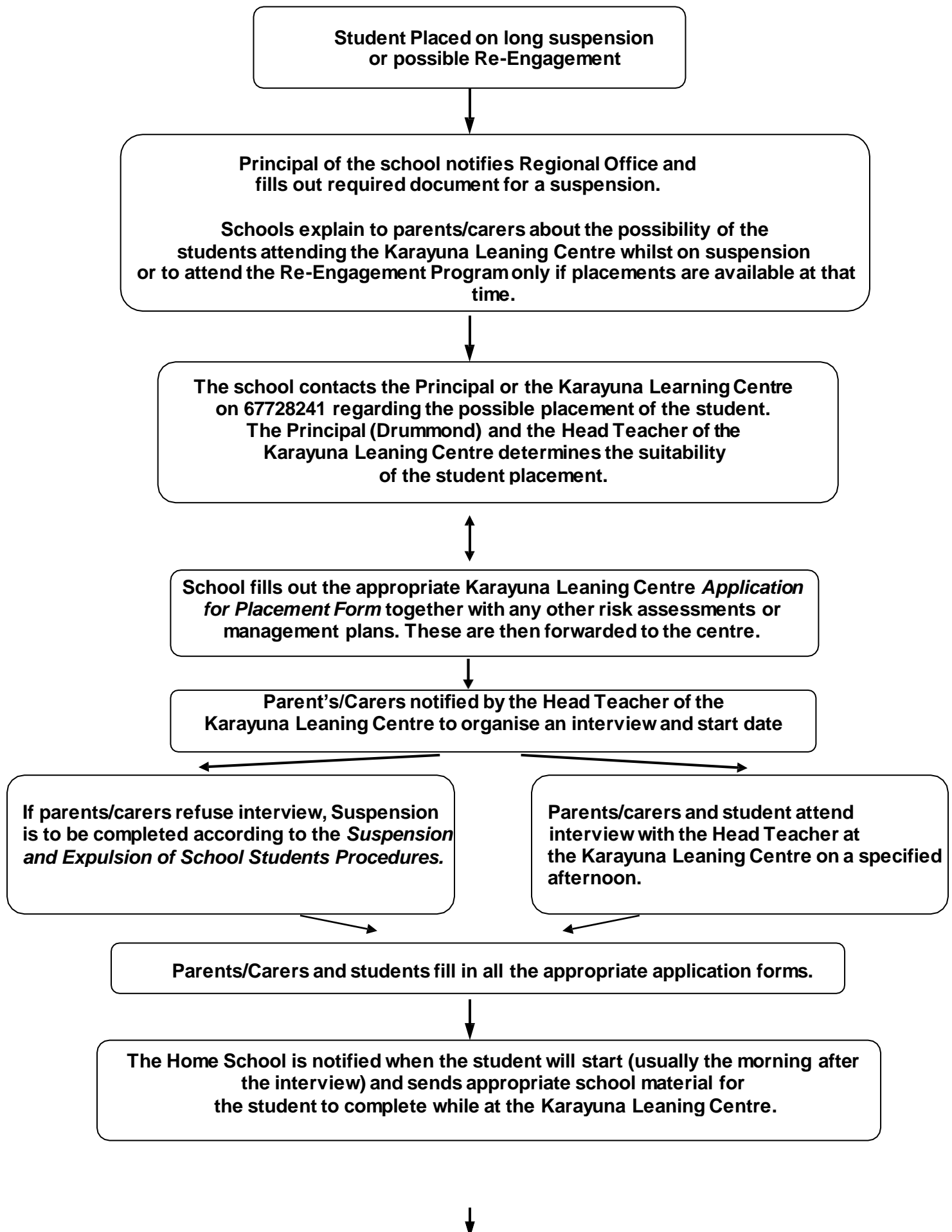
The process of preparing, planting, and sustaining the gardens and relationships requires a long-term commitment by the centre and the students and one in which we are able to achieve as a group.

Caring for the land is a deeply spiritual exercise, with theological implications rooted in the power of place.

It is also hope that we can get one of the leaders of the Community Garden project, Mr Steve Widders (Uncle Steve), who is an Anawain Elder. Having Uncle Steve there would mean the students would have the chance to engage with an elder and learn some important life lessons from him. Due to Steve being blind the students would also appreciate the day-to-day challenges that Uncle Steve encounters.

Another Anawain person that we would like to link up with is Gabi Briggs. She is a local woman who teaches weaving the Lomandra using native grasses and cultural practice. Gaby currently lives away but through the use of SYKPE it is anticipated that plants produced at the Community Garden could be used in the traditional making of baskets. The workshop will teach the students importance of weaving today as an Aboriginal woman/man whilst also honouring the ancestors who wove before us.

### 3. Referral Process



**While a student is at the Karayuna Learning Centre, the Head Teacher sends the Home school, *Student Weekly Evaluation Reports and attendance sheets* either through Sentra or by fax.**



**Once the student has completed their program at the Karayuna Learning Centre, the Head Teacher and the home school coordinates the re-entry meeting.**

**Before the meeting the Head Teacher will send the school a student report electronically.**



**The Head Teacher of the Karayuna Learning Centre then will send The Home school all relevant *school work that the student has completed and any other relevant information.***



**After a few weeks the Home school, and Parent/Carer, will be contacted to complete an interview over the phone to evaluate the program (*Evaluation Forms*) Karayuna Learning Centre as soon as possible.**

**The student will complete an evaluation form on the day that they leave the Karayuna Learning Centre.**

## **4. Staffing and Contact with Parents and/or Carers**

### **4.1. Staffing**

The Karayuna Learning Centre is staffed by a Head Teacher, a Student Learning Support Officer and professional consultants.

If the Head Teacher is unable to attend the centre due to illness or professional learning, a casual will be sought or the centre may be closed for the duration of the Head Teacher's absence. If it is necessary to close *The Karayuna Learning Centre* due to a casual teacher not being able to be found, the Principal will ensure that parents and carers are contacted as early as possible.

The Head Teacher will be responsible for:

- Promoting awareness of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* and its operation in liaison with regional personnel
- Providing learning programs for students attending the centre
- Initiating and facilitating the development of behaviour intervention plans for attending students
- Consulting with regional behaviour teams and school learning support teams to develop and implement ongoing supports to facilitate successful behaviour and academic interventions for students returning to school after a suspension
- Supervise the Students Learning Support Officer.
- Liaise with *The Karayuna Learning Centre's* Management Committee and school principals to ascertain the suitability of students accessing the centre
- Participate in the ongoing evaluation of the program in collaboration with the local management committee, and regional personnel such centres.
- Coordinate and arrange Committee meetings.
- Maintain records and collect data to assist in the ongoing planning and monitoring of the program
- Knowledge and understanding of EEO, WHS, ethical practice and EAPS.

### **4.2. Contact with Parents and/or Carers**

The program is voluntary and offered to support students placed on long suspension, to successfully return to school. Punctuality, regular attendance and successful participation in the program may reduce the student's length of suspension and allow early return to school.

Parents or carers must give their approval in writing at the pre-intervention interview for their child to access the centre. Continued positive contact with parents/carers will be encouraged. Parents will be requested to supply contact information and be aware that if their child's behaviour is inappropriate they will be notified by the Head Teacher and their child may be sent home.

An information brochure for parents providing details of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* program is available.

## **5. Contact with Schools, Student Absences, Medication, Reintegration, Mentor Guidelines and Evaluation**

### **5.1. Contact with Schools**

Initial contact is by phone and/or completing *The Karayuna Learning Centre's* Application for Placement to the Head Teacher of the Suspension Centre.

Regular contact will be maintained with the student's home school to discuss progress and program implementation in preparation for returning to school. An individual plan addressing areas of need will be developed by the Head Teacher (*The Karayuna Learning Centre*).



## **5.2. Student Absences**

If a student is absent, the parents or caregivers are requested to contact *The Karayuna Learning Centre* on the morning of the student's absence by 9.30 am. When no such notification is received, and the student is absent, the Head Teacher will notify the home school and the parents by morning tea of that day. Details of student attendance at *The Karayuna Learning Centre* will be sent to the student's home school each Friday.

Note: Students attending the centre should be recorded as whole day absences (We) on the home school's attendance register. However, the attendance register should be annotated to indicate the student's attendance at a DET program. The ***Special Circumstances Register for Suspension Centres*** attendance notification from the centre should be attached to the attendance register.

## **5.3. Medication**

Medication will be administered as per parent's instructions by the trained SLSO or the Head Teacher. All student medication will be secured by staff in a labelled container provided by the parents or caregivers. Parents/Carers are to complete the Administering Medication form with details of the medication including what it is for, dosage, the time of administration and possible reactions are to be provided by parents/carers at the pre-intervention interview.

## **5.4. Reintegration (Return to School Procedure)**

Positive behaviour, attendance and completion of an acceptable amount of work will assist in the successful return to school of the student.

Links between the Head Teacher (*The Karayuna Learning Centre*) and a nominated person from the home school will ensure the smoothest possible transition to school.

A written report will be provided to schools after the student has returned to school.

## **5.5. Evaluation – Surveys on Survey Monkey**

Students' home schools will be asked to complete a survey on *Survey Monkey* to evaluate the students return to school. This form will help in continual improvement of the programs provided.

Parents/carers will also be required to complete an interview over the phone within a week of the student returning to school. The teacher will then add the answers onto the specific survey on

One day prior to the student leaving the Karayuna Learning Centre, they shall complete an evaluation with the teacher. The teacher will then add the answers onto the specific survey on

## **6. Learning Materials, the Behaviour Program and School Counsellors**

### **6.1. Learning Materials**

The student's home school should provide appropriate curriculum based learning material as required by the *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Procedures*. The Head Teacher (*The Karayuna Learning Centre*) will also monitor the student's progress in completing the behaviour and social skills programs provided by the centre.

### **6.2. The Behaviour Program**

The behaviour program will include modules on communication, physical health, mental health and social skills. The program will be tailored to suit the needs of the individual student and will focus on addressing the behaviours that led to the suspension. The Learning Support Team of the student's home school will provide ongoing support after the student returns to school taking into account the program the student has been following at *The Karayuna Learning Centre*.

### **6.3. School Counsellor**

A School Counsellor is not attached to *The Karayuna Learning Centre*. The student's home School Counsellor should:

- write a report if a child is given a long suspension, however not for a short suspension. Preferably, the report is written before the student returns to school so that the recommendations that the counsellor makes can be taken into account and actioned prior to resolution of the suspension. However, this is not always possible depending on time frames etc.
- contribute to the process of engaging the student and family and eliciting a commitment to change.
- assess the student's learning, behavioural, family and social needs, liaise with other agencies and recommend additional interventions, support or assessments.
- provide intensive short term counselling or support upon the student's return to the home school, where appropriate.
- telephone the Head Teacher of *The Karayuna Learning Centre* to ascertain whether information from the *Centre* may be appropriately included in the suspension report or added to the Guidance file.