

	Topic:	Aboriginal Education Policy & Plan
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RATIONALE

Aboriginal peoples are the original inhabitants of Australia. Catholic education, and St Mary’s School, embraces the richness and diversity which exists within the Aboriginal nations of Australia. Catholic education is committed to maximising the learning opportunities for Aboriginal peoples.

St Mary’s School has a responsibility to create an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal peoples, their histories, cultures and spirituality. Catholic schools will play an important role in the formation of their students to develop as active and contributing members of Australian society. ‘Catholic schools can serve as models for all within Western Australia who seek to create genuine communities. Such communities are always founded upon shared commitment to the common good’ (Bishops’ Mandate paragraph 6).

Saint John Paul II in his address to the Aboriginal peoples of Australia said:

The Church of Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until... (the Aboriginal peoples of Australia) have made... (their) contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.

Particular emphasis is placed on Early Childhood Education as the real foundation of social and emotional development for children, and of literacy and learning. Curriculum, teaching and assessment programs in all year levels will be challenging and culturally appropriate.

In collaboration with the school community, St Mary’s School will enable Aboriginal students to develop their full potential emotionally, socially, academically, physically and spiritually.

In a caring Christian environment all students will be provided with learning experiences that promote an understanding of Aboriginality and the shared history of Australia to empower them to full participation in the reconciliation process. This will be carried out in partnership with St Mary's Vision Statement:

St Mary's School provides an education that endeavours to equip each child with the Christian values and life skills necessary to meet the challenges of a changing world. We believe that all peoples are created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26). We acknowledge the diversity and individuality of each child and that all children deserve the opportunity to develop into the type of person God wishes them to be.

Reconciliation is a very important process that recognises cultural traditions and values. St Mary's School continues to foster the principles of inclusion, justice and equity. Therefore, as with all members of the community:

Aboriginal peoples have the right to expect all followers of Jesus Christ as witness to the truth of the Gospel to support them in their legitimate efforts towards development as a peoples seeking equality of dignity and opportunity in Australia.

Aboriginal students and their communities will continue to be integral to the growing partnership fostered by St Mary's School ethos and will harmonise cultural awareness with Christian beliefs.

DEFINITIONS

The term 'Aboriginal' refers to the original inhabitants of Australia and respectfully includes Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The term 'Aboriginal Education' applies to all areas within the school including learning and teaching, reconciliation, employment, career pathways and community partnerships.

The term 'Aboriginal Education Plan' refers to schools developing a formalised approach through the development of a strategic action plan to address Aboriginal Education in the school.

The term 'Aboriginal Nation' refers to Aboriginal society as one that is diverse, complex and sophisticated. Australia is made up of many Aboriginal Nations.

PRINCIPLES

1. Aboriginal peoples have a rich history, culture and spirituality that may be shared with all Australians. The cultural differences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today and other cultures shall be recognised and respected.
2. St Mary's School is committed to increasing knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experience of Aboriginal peoples as the first peoples of Australia. All members of St Mary's School and community shall have an understanding of and respect for the values, heritage and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. St Mary's School recognises that parents are the first educators of their children. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to determine the educational needs of their children.
4. St Mary's School is committed to collaborative decision making and capacity building with Aboriginal peoples, parents, caregivers, families and communities.

5. Aboriginal students at St Mary's School have the right to be provided with educational experiences comparable to all Australians whilst maintaining their cultural identity.
6. St Mary's School is committed to reconciliation which promotes the principles of inclusivity, equity, justice and consultation.
7. Aboriginal language programs shall be supported where appropriate.
8. The employment and ongoing training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at St Mary's School is a part of the process of reconciliation.

PROCEDURES

1. The Aboriginal Education Plan will be developed in consultation with their school communities, consistent with guidelines provided by national and state agreements.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples shall be involved in assisting St Mary's School staff and students to come to an understanding of the similarities and differences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
3. St Mary's School shall give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolment opportunities to identify with their heritage and promote respect for their cultural values and traditions.
4. St Mary's School will integrate Aboriginal Education across all areas of the curriculum.
5. Aboriginal languages and cultural education programs for use at St Mary's School shall be developed in close consultation with the Aboriginal communities which are consistent with relevant documents developed by the Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee (CEAC). This will ensure that the content reflects the local community's languages and cultural variations.
6. St Mary's School will actively encourage and support Aboriginal peoples to be represented appropriately on school decision making committees.
7. St Mary's School shall provide access to quality education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who are undertaking training and higher education at all levels.
8. St Mary's School shall encourage the employment of eligible, qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to leadership roles.
9. St Mary's School shall be fully involved in the reconciliation process through the recognition, acceptance and celebration of Aboriginal cultural traditions and values.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLAN AIM

The aim of this Aboriginal Education Plan is to develop and implement strategies that will improve outcomes for all students by focusing on teaching, learning, curriculum, leadership and cultural awareness.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLAN OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Aboriginal Education Plan is to:

1. Improve attendance, where required
2. Improve literacy and numeracy skills
3. Ensure Aboriginal students and their families are prepared, motivated, and supported to learn and participate in the St Mary's School environment
4. Fortify the talent of parents and the community to work with St Mary's School to improve educational outcomes

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLAN INITIATIVES

St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan will advocate:

1. A greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their histories and their cultures.
2. Foster sensitivity to the disadvantages suffered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. Discover ways for positive interaction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

In implementing the Aboriginal Education Plan, St Mary's School will aim to:

1. Involve Aboriginal peoples where possible when teaching Aboriginal Studies.
2. Check that material on spirituality or kinship systems is acceptable to the local Aboriginal communities.
3. Seek advice from peoples with expertise in Aboriginal Education such as
 - St Mary's School Aboriginal Teaching Assistant
 - local Aboriginal community members
 - CEWA Aboriginal Education Consultants
 - Local, State and Commonwealth Aboriginal organisations such as Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups, Catholic Aboriginal Ministry, Aboriginal Training and Cultural Institutions and Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee (CEAC).
4. Ensure all resources are age appropriate, relevant to topic and accepted by local communities.
5. Plan learning experiences in a natural environment as Aboriginal students may at times feel more comfortable learning outdoors.
6. Invite Aboriginal members of the community to teach a lesson on their area of specialisation.

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St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan - LEARNING

System Strategic Outcomes (LEAD)	Strategic Plan Link	SMART Goals	Actions/Strategies	Responsibility & Timeline	QCS Component Link	Success Indicators
LEARNING Enhance student achievement and well being. Increase student and staff engagement in their own learning and faith formation.	<p>Being united, committed and explicit about St Mary's School core objective – to improve the learning outcomes for all students.</p> <p>Make learning appropriate for individual learning needs, including high achievers and those in need of remediation.</p>	<p>Gain a greater understanding of the Cross Curricula Priority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures</p> <p>Investigate ways in which St Mary's School can maximise professional learning opportunities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures</p>	<p>Research to be done on the Cross Curricula Priority</p> <p>A localised Aboriginal Culture and History program/resource access will be developed with assistance from ATA and Community centres</p> <p>Staff to identify and participate in Professional Learning opportunities</p> <p>Liaise with CEWA Aboriginal Education Consultant</p> <p>Increase use of GECKOS website and guest presenters</p> <p>Identify and disseminate information in regards to appropriate resources to use</p>	<p>All staff – end of 2017</p> <p>ATA – end of 2018</p> <p>Local community members – end of 2018</p> <p>CEWAG Aboriginal Education Consultant end of 2018</p> <p>All staff – annually</p> <p>Principal – ongoing</p> <p>All staff – ongoing</p> <p>Aboriginal Guest Speakers – needs basis</p> <p>Principal – ongoing</p> <p>ATA – ongoing</p> <p>Aboriginal Cultural Agencies & Centres</p>	<p>306 – Systematic Curriculum Delivery</p> <p>304 – Targeted Use of School Resources</p> <p>303 – A Culture that Promotes Learning</p> <p>304 – Targeted Use of School Resources</p> <p>202 – Wider Community Partnerships</p> <p>303 – A Culture that Promotes Learning</p>	<p>Greater visual presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture in school environment</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures embedded in all teaching programmes</p> <p>Staff and students are more aware of local Aboriginal culture and history</p>

St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan - ENGAGEMENT

System Strategic Outcomes (LEAD)	Strategic Plan Link	SMART Goals	Actions/Strategies	Responsibility & Timeline	QCS Component Link	Success Indicators
ENGAGEMENT Enhance parental engagement in their child's learning and faith formation. Develop our peoples to be leaders in Catholic Education's mission.	Creating a culture of welcome, inclusion, collaboration, shared responsibility between the school, students and the family for learning and student well – being. Build partnership with parents, Church agencies, local businesses and community organisations.	Develop a co-ordinated whole school approach to the implementation of Personalised Learning Plans for all Aboriginal students.	A whole school strategy/plan will be developed to engage the parents, students and community in the students' education needs and the school	All staff – end of 2017 Parents – end of 2017 Students – end of 2017 Local Community – end of 2017 CEWAG Aboriginal Education Consultant – end of 2017	201 – Engagement with the School Community 307 – Differentiated Teaching and Learning 402 – Pastoral Care of Students	The school will have a developed and implemented Personalised Learning Plans for all Aboriginal students.

St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan - ACCOUNTABILITY

System Strategic Outcomes (LEAD)	Strategic Plan Link	SMART Goals	Actions/Strategies	Responsibility & Timeline	QCS Component Link	Success Indicators
<p>ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>Ensure inclusivity, good governance and the resource allocation required to meet our mission.</p> <p>Increase understanding of our individual and collective responsibility for Catholic Education's mission.</p>	<p>Create and sustain a culture of co-operation, trust and respect where all students and staff feel safe and valued.</p> <p>Create a physical environment that is well maintained, inviting and conducive to effective learning.</p>	<p>An Aboriginal Education Plan will be developed and implemented.</p>	<p>Develop a Scope and Sequence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures</p> <p>Introduce a Welcome to Country for all major school events</p> <p>Introduce an Acknowledgement of Country for all School Assemblies</p> <p>Create an Aboriginal designed mural to be painted in the school</p> <p>Plan and celebrate significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events: NAIDOC Week Reconciliation Week</p>	<p>All staff – end of 2018</p> <p>CEWA Aboriginal Education Consultants including AET members – end of 2018</p> <p>ATA – 2017</p> <p>Aboriginal Elders – 2017</p> <p>Principal - – end of 2018</p> <p>All staff – annual</p> <p>All students – annual</p> <p>ATA – annual</p> <p>Principal – annual</p> <p>School Community – annual</p>	<p>306 – Systematic Curriculum Delivery</p> <p>202 – Wider Community Partnerships</p> <p>202 – Wider Community Partnerships</p> <p>306 – Systematic Curriculum Delivery</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures embedded in all teaching programs</p> <p>A visual presence of Aboriginal cultures throughout the school</p> <p>Increased presence of Yamatji/Aboriginal peoples in the school</p>

St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan - DISCIPLESHIP

System Strategic Outcomes (LEAD)	Strategic Plan Link	SMART Goals	Actions/Strategies	Responsibility & Timeline	QCS Component Link	Success Indicators
<p>DISCIPLESHIP</p> <p>Enhance opportunities for personal faith and growth.</p> <p>Increase enrolment of the vulnerable, poor and marginalised as a visible sign of our faith</p>	<p>Challenging staff and students to identify and create a positive perception of citizens through promoting reconciliation, justice, compassion and mercy.</p> <p>Develop meaningful partnerships and articulate the fundamental importance of Catholic Ethos, between school, family and parish.</p>	<p>St Mary's School has an Aboriginal Educational Policy consistent with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan and the CEWA Aboriginal Education Policy. The Policy is actioned through the St Mary's School Aboriginal Education Plan.</p>	<p>Staff will participate in the development of the Aboriginal Education Policy.</p> <p>Liaise with CEWAG Aboriginal Education Consultant</p>	<p>All staff – end of 2017</p> <p>CEWAG Aboriginal Education Consultant - All staff – end of 2017</p> <p>Parents All staff – end of 2017</p> <p>School Board All staff – end of 2017</p> <p>Community Members All staff – end of 2017</p>	<p>202 – Wider Community Partnerships</p>	<p>The school will have developed and implemented an Aboriginal Education Plan & Policy</p> <p>Aboriginal parents are better engaged in Catholic Education at St Mary's School</p>