

ST CATHERINE'S SCHOOL

# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

2025



Sydney

Courage to Lead, Heart to Serve



# VISION

Our vision for reconciliation at St Catherine's School is to foster a community that recognises, respects, and values the histories, cultures and ongoing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We aspire for students to be secure in their character, confident and knowledgeable about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and respectful towards all people regardless of ethnicity or background. We provide opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of being, gaining an appreciation for their unique knowledge systems and enduring connections to Country, including land, waters, and skies.

St Catherine's recognises that practical measures are needed to ensure we provide equal and equitable educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We aim to build meaningful relationships, fostering collaboration with First Nations communities and addressing inequalities and inequities through positive partnerships. By doing so, we aim to create a culturally safe and inclusive environment where reconciliation thrives.





# ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

We would like to acknowledge the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Traditional Custodians and First Peoples of the land, waterways and ocean where St Catherine's School stands today. We would also like to pay our deepest respects to Elders both past and present.

Together as a school, we acknowledge the continuing cultural relationships of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their unique rich cultures which contribute significantly to the St Catherine's community and the lives of all Australians.





# RELATIONSHIPS



## Relationships in the Classroom

*We are committed to engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our learning activities. Having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in learning environments is vital when teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures.*

### GOAL

To enrich the experiences of the students through authentic experiences and teaching. St Catherine's is committed to employing First Nations educators to enhance the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout the curriculum.

### ACTIONS

- Junior School – Aunty Maxine Ryan works with junior school students on an ongoing basis.
- Senior School: Theresa Ardler has been employed for Term 4 and Semester 1 to work with individual faculties to develop appropriate curriculum content and learning activities.

*We commit to providing opportunities for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to celebrate their unique cultural identities. These opportunities positively impact the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students which creates a strong cultural understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, Contributions, Identities and Histories in the wider school community.*

### GOAL

For students to learn through hands-on activities and storytelling through art and dance.

### ACTIONS

- Establish a program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and all students to share their culture and stories through Sister Girls Yarning Group.
- Our Indigenous students participate in Indigenous dance and art making with local artists and performers.

## Relationships Around the School

*We commit to inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, parents/carers and community members to be active representatives on our school's committees. We commit to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives inform decision-making processes by respecting the experiences and knowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples can bring to our committees.*

### GOAL

Our goal at St Catherine's is to invite local Aboriginal and Torres Strait community members to join the RAP committee.

### ACTIONS

- Invite Indigenous and Non-Indigenous student representation onto the RAP committee.
- The inclusion of a local community member on the RAP committee for 2025.

*We are committed to forging a meaningful and ongoing relationship with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, and people recognised in their community as Traditional Owners. We hope this relationship can be of mutual benefit and that local Elders and Traditional Owners will feel safe and confident to share their historical and cultural knowledge with our staff, students and children.*

### GOAL

To develop relationships with local community members and students' families to share stories and culture with all students.

### ACTIONS

- Develop working relationships with the local communities and schools.
- Collaboration with La Perouse Public School.
- Build relationships with Elder Aunty Maxine Ryan, Guruwal Elders, past alumni families, and with Theresa Ardler. Theresa is an Elder in her Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community and connected to the La Perouse Aboriginal Community through her mother and grandmother.

*We are supported to reflect on and build our cultural responsiveness to improve our practice and best support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. We are provided with a range of opportunities to build our knowledge and understanding of our own positionality and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, contributions and cultures.*

### GOAL

To enhance staff understanding of Indigenous perspectives and culture.

### ACTIONS

- Present the RAP to all staff in January 2025.

# RELATIONSHIPS



- Engage the services of Theresa Ardler to work with faculties/ departments across the school.
- Participate in Waratah Project activities and on Country days.
- Provide St Catherine's with an on-Country learning day at the end of Term 4 2024.

*Our school will collaborate on projects that visibly and authentically embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in learning programs and the physical environment. Through this culture of collaboration across the school and with the community, we commit to creating an environment where young people, staff and community members acknowledge, respect and experience connection to the First Australians.*

## GOAL

To reflect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Histories and Cultures in our physical environment.

## ACTIONS

- Design and create a mural in collaboration with a local Indigenous artist(s) as an artist-in-residence project, commencing in Culture in Curriculum Week. Artist(s), as an artist in residence project, commencing in Culture in Curriculum Week.
- Investigate options for a yarning circle on the school campus
- Design signage for the Indigenous plant garden that provides information about the plants, their properties and their uses.

## Relationships with Community

*Where appropriate, significant events at our school commence with a Welcome to Country. Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years. By incorporating these protocols into formal events and important occasions, we recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Custodians of the Land.*

## GOAL

A Welcome or Acknowledgment to Country to be given by students or an Elder from the community at all major events.

## ACTIONS

- A Welcome or Acknowledgment to Country to be given by students or an Elder from the community at all major events.

*We will develop and maintain a stakeholder list that reflects our current and future working relationships with members of the community who are committed to working collaboratively to drive reconciliation initiatives.*

## GOAL

To build meaningful relationships with local and regional First Nations Elders and Communities.

## ACTIONS

- Make connections with: - Gamay Rangers - IndigiGrow – Tranby.
- Build upon our collaboration with aligned organisations to impact change. Some of these are: AIEF, GO Foundation and Gujaga.

*We commit to forming ongoing relationships with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Our relationships will be built on mutual respect, trust and inclusiveness. We value these relationships and the way they make opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff, students, children and the community.*

## GOAL

We are committed to forming respectful, open and ongoing relationships with our local First Nations communities.

## ACTIONS

- Staff reflect on levels of engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, family and/or community during Culture in Community Week.
- Continue to build relationships with local Indigenous businesses such as IndigiGrow.

*We commit to establishing a space in our school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and community members to catch up and have a cup of tea, meet with staff, students and children, hold meetings or get together with other community members.*

## GOAL

Create a dedicated cultural space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for cultural activities.

## ACTIONS

- Design and build a yarning circle on the school campus.











# RESPECT



## Respect in the Classroom

*Our school community is committed to learning about reconciliation in Australia. Having an understanding of the concept, history and progress of reconciliation is an important part of continuing the reconciliation journey. This understanding also helps to strengthen engagement with our school's RAP by positioning it within the broader story of reconciliation in Australia.*

### GOAL

We commit to incorporating nationally significant days for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Reconciliation into our curriculum where appropriate, to increase knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures, contributions and contemporary issues. Although, at the same time remembering the past and how to improve Cultural uniqueness by bridging cultural understanding and ways of *Knowing, Doing and Being*.

### ACTIONS

- Steps of reconciliation are highlighted to the students through specifically designed activities during our academic/wellbeing time.
- Sharing our RAP plan with teaching and professional staff.
- Provide meaningful activities during Reconciliation Week.
- Significant days are visual in various school publications, calendars and excursions.

*We commit to knowing the news and being responsive to current issues significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the process of reconciliation. We will do this by delivering our curriculum, policies and procedures, and integrating it into the way our school operates.*

### GOAL

To map and review current affairs issues into age-appropriate curriculum.

### ACTIONS

- Create a curriculum map Stage 2 - Stage 6 for critical thinking and discussion about Aboriginal and Torres Strait current affairs in the curriculum.

## Respect Around the School

*Our school recognises the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to the Country on which we live, work, learn and grow. All staff and students have the opportunity*

*to show respect to Traditional Owners and Custodians by regularly conducting an Acknowledgment of Country at meetings and events throughout the year.*

### GOAL

Visible Acknowledgment of Country in public and class areas.

### ACTIONS

- Educate staff and students about what the acknowledgment means.
- Incorporate Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country into meetings, assemblies, events and gatherings.
- Have local Elders perform Welcome to Country. Theresa Ardler did her first Welcome to Country at the first staff meeting she attended.
- Add a visible Acknowledgment of Country in the reception area.
- Have an agreed use of Acknowledgment of Country with Theresa Ardler and Aunty Maxine.

*We commit to demonstrating our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in the physical environment of our school. We understand that making our respect visible in the learning environment through the incorporation of meaningful, relevant and culturally appropriate art, artifacts and symbolism reinforces our work toward reconciliation. It also makes our intentions and actions clear to our students, parents and the broader community.*

### GOAL

Develop areas in the physical environment. Garden near JS STEM Lab, Mural and Plaques in Junior School and Senior School.

### ACTIONS

- Further develop the gardens near the Junior School STEM lab, the bush tucker garden and the area outside the Performing Arts & Aquatic Centre.
- Visible murals around the school with input from our Indigenous students.
- Signage in the Indigenous gardens to identify plants and their use.
- Create a Yarning Circle on campus.

# RESPECT



## Respect with the Community

*We commit to organising and participating in events to celebrate or commemorate days/weeks of national significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the Reconciliation Movement to show our pride in, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and Contributions. We also commit to including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives when we commemorate other national days, such as January 26 (Australia Day) and Anzac Day.*

### GOAL

We commit to organising and participating in events to celebrate or commemorate days/weeks of national significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the reconciliation movement to show our pride, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and building a continuous contribution.

### ACTIONS

- Organise guest speakers and celebrations to be held for Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week and continuing to build a localised story that fits with the theme of each year for these significant days in our school calendar.
- Incorporate Indigenous perspective in ANZAC Ceremony and finding a First Nations Digger to tell their war story when they fought for Australia.
- Recognise days of national significance in calendars and other school documentation and events.

*Our school flies/displays the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag to demonstrate respect and recognition for the Histories, Cultures and contributions of the First Peoples of Australia. Flying or displaying the flags promotes a sense of community partnership and a commitment toward reconciliation.*

### GOAL

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags to be flown on external school flag poles and present at formal occasions.

### ACTIONS

- Torres Strait Islander flagpole to be added.
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags to be present at formal assemblies.

*Our school is proud to launch our RAP at an event that recognises the efforts of the working group and celebrates our school and service's commitment to reconciliation. We will use our RAP launch event to inform the wider community about our RAP and the many different ways they can get involved and take action toward reconciliation.*

### GOAL

Launch the RAP to the school community.

### ACTIONS

- Make the RAP public to all staff at the mandatory training day, January 2025.
- Launch the RAP at the Culture in Curriculum to the school community in 2025.
- RAP is available publicly on the school website.

*We will raise awareness of racism, its impacts and how to respond effectively when it happens. We will do this through an anti-racism strategy tailored to the needs of our school.*

### GOAL

To work closely with the anti-racism strategy so that across the school, we can continue to build and learn from a cultural lens, making a clear statement that 'No Racism' will be tolerated at St. Catherine's School.

### ACTIONS

- Implement a program into the wellbeing time for students to workshop about racial issues relating to Indigenous communities, and Indigenous students in our school.











# OPPORTUNITIES



## In the Classroom

*All staff have support to understand and apply the cross-curriculum priority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in their classrooms. Teachers consider the cross-curriculum priority when developing units, lesson plans and resources in all learning areas and across all year levels.*

### GOAL

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross curriculum priorities are embedded in curriculum plans K-12.

### ACTIONS

- Provide support for staff to develop cross-curricular priorities into subject programs K-12 through the involvement of an Indigenous Education Consultant, Theresa Ardler.

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures are a key, ongoing part of curriculum planning, development and evaluation across all year levels and learning areas. We will review curriculum documents to find out where we include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, and to what extent and where we could include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and Contributions in the curriculum.*

### GOAL

Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in curriculum planning, development and evaluation processes where appropriate, is a key and ongoing consideration across all year levels and learning areas. Explicit curriculum for priority-identified areas will be delivered where appropriate.

### ACTIONS

- Heads of Department to review curriculum content in the Senior School.
- Stage leaders to review curriculum content in the Junior School.
- Theresa Ardler (Indigenous Education Consultant) to provide support to faculties K-12.

*Teachers understand and meaningfully engage with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers focus on reconciliation, in particular Focus Area 2.4*

### GOAL

All teaching staff evaluate their understanding and application of Australian Professional Standards for Teachers Standard 2.4.

### ACTIONS

- At the end of Culture in Curriculum Term 1 Week 3, teachers complete a short survey/reflection on their understanding of the 2.4 teaching standard.

## Opportunities Around the School

*All staff at school are aware of policies referring to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and building knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in Australia. When internal policies are reviewed and developed, we will ensure that they are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Perspectives, and that there is a plan in place to ensure that all staff comply with these policies in their daily practice.*

### GOAL

All staff in our school are aware of policies that refer specifically to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and increasing knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in Australia. We have a plan in place to ensure all staff comply with these policies in their daily practice. Our policies are inclusive of diversity, and we aim to increase knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in Australia.

### ACTIONS

- Review policies across the school to ensure they are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- Explicitly make policies known and visible.
- Non-teaching staff will prioritise this area as an agenda item in their launch meeting at the start of 2025.

# OPPORTUNITIES



*Commitment to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) from all staff is essential for developing a RAP that is implemented in a meaningful and sustainable way. All staff will be involved in the ongoing development and implementation of our RAP through staff development opportunities facilitated by the RAP Working Group.*

## GOAL

Make staff aware of the process and the need for the RAP.

## ACTIONS

- Present RAP at the beginning of 2025 to all staff.
- Launch the RAP to local community Elders and families from Redfern and La Perouse Aboriginal Communities at Culture in Curriculum Week.
- Non-teaching staff are invited to attend Culture in Curriculum activities when appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for staff to give feedback on the RAP.

*We have set aside dedicated funds from within our budget to procure relevant goods and services that strengthen the sustainability of our RAP Actions. Staff are aware that it is important to consider remuneration for people who have been involved in RAP initiatives out of respect for the time and resources that they have contributed.*

## GOAL

To ensure there is sufficient budget allocation for RAP actions, including mural, employment, yarning circle, and various events.

## ACTIONS

- Include events, staffing, actions into budget for 2025.

## Opportunities with the Community

*We commit to learning more about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and Contributions of the Country on which we live, work, learn and play, by working with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to learn about events of historical and cultural significance and visit appropriate sites with Elders or Indigenous Knowledge Holders.*

## GOAL

Develop an annual plan for events and opportunities for staff and students to engage with on Country learning.

## ACTIONS

- On 5 December 2024, all permanent staff to attend an on-Country learning day at Kamay Kurnell.
- Invite local community members, including Aunty Maxine, to work with students and staff on a variety of events and activities to learn about On Country.

*We are committed to reflecting on the progress made in the growth of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and contributions in our school. We will track the progress of our RAP, continually revisit our commitments, and celebrate our achievements, while generating new ideas to develop and sustain our RAP into the future.*

## GOAL

We are committed to reflecting on the progress made in the growth of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories, Cultures and contributions in our school. We will track the progress of our RAP, continually revisit our commitments, and celebrate our achievements, while generating new ideas to develop and sustain our RAP into the future.

## ACTIONS

- Hosting Indigenous PD where staff are informed of the changes that have been implemented within the school relating to Indigenous culture.
- Meet regularly to ensure the RAP is being followed.
- Celebrate all students achieving their goals at assemblies and other events, during Reconciliation Week.
- Performance of a commissioned dance at Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.









Sydney



**St Catherine's School**

[www.stcatherines.nsw.edu.au](http://www.stcatherines.nsw.edu.au)

[stcaths@stcaths.nsw.edu.au](mailto:stcaths@stcaths.nsw.edu.au)

26 Albion Street Waverley

NSW 2024 Australia

+61 2 8305 6200