

2024 FIRE Carriers Covenant

We recognise the special place and culture of Aboriginal peoples within Australia. We acknowledge that Aboriginal peoples have been the caretakers of this Land for more than 60,000 years. We respect their spiritual connection to Mother Earth through the Dreaming.

'An apology begins the healing process. Apology means understanding, a willingness to enter into the suffering. It implies a commitment to do more'. The late Sir Ronald Wilson, Chair of the National Inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families. We understand that practical measures need to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people in education, health, employment, and general opportunity.

"Reconciliation is an active pursuit – it's about getting on with what's needed and what we know to get the results we all want, and that's a mixture of measures that target the body, the mind and the spirit." *Mick Dodson, Australian of the Year, National Press Club address, 17 February 2009*
True Reconciliation requires national and local solutions achieved through positive and purposeful partnerships not just for today but for tomorrow. We work for Reconciliation, in partnership with those who believe that there can be an alternative to the present order.

Our School


St Patrick's Primary School is committed to Reconciliation and sees it as the process of bridging the gap that has developed between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians due to the events of history. Reconciliation is a way of developing lines of communication recognising the integrity and dignity of all parties so that both cultures can walk together in friendship. We hope to develop a relationship marked by equality, empathy and an understanding of culture and difference. We want the reconciliation we are involved in to be a process of healing, a process of putting right the wrongs of the past. FIRE Carriers are required to hand over their position when they leave our school, so that the position is sustained, and the projects continue.

Our Covenant


St Patrick's first covenant was developed in 2009. Each year our staff work to make this covenant their own. We have a reconciliation group who are involved in the continuing development of the covenant –The FIRE carriers. This group consists of staff and students from St Patrick's. As a Fire Carrier you make a promise to work towards the goals of the Foundation, with a strong focus on reconciliation, turning people's negative attitudes towards Aboriginal people into positive ones and raising awareness and education for our fellow students about our shared history.

At St. Patrick's, being a Fire Carrier means more than simply wearing a badge. The School board has cited the covenant and a member from the Catholic Education Office assisted in the development of our covenant.



Core Value	Action	Responsibility	Activities
 <p>Spirituality</p> <p>Focus area: Learn, teach, Share, Grow towards understanding Aboriginal Spirituality (Holistic)</p>	<p>Through prayer and Knowledge gain/engage a deeper awareness of justice issues</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Continue to incorporate Aboriginal prayers and symbols in liturgy by using the message stick during reading of the Word and school masses</p> <p>Use of the Aboriginal Our Father for prayers, school masses and community gatherings</p> <p>FIRE Carriers to prepare and lead a whole school Liturgy for National Sorry Day</p>
	<p>Explore the significance of spirituality in Aboriginal Art</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Use of Richard Campbell's Station of the Cross for our St Patrick's community</p> <p>Display of Trehna Hamm's Aboriginal Australian Creation Story Artworks with information plaques in Corridor</p> <p>Display Message stick with Bunjil the Creator in the form of the eagle. (Bunjil the Creator Spirit extended story) Biامي and Pangerang stories.</p>




	Listen to Aboriginal Stories	All Staff	<p>Excursions to places of Aboriginal significance (Walk the Bullawah trail, Mullinmur Billabong, Warby ranges, Winton wetlands and Chiltern national park</p> <p>CEO Aboriginal Education Leaders (Michael Chisholm and Lou Levi) invited to come and educate our students on our past and share her knowledge of local Aboriginal stories.</p> <p>Listen to dreaming stories and revisit Aboriginal creation story</p> <p>Staff encouraged to participate in the Mungo experience.</p>
Core Value	Action	Responsibility	Activities
 <p>Cultural Recognition and Awareness Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness</p>	Embrace Aboriginal stories and culture within the school ceremonies	Students, FIRE carriers, Teachers, Principal	<p>Invite Jye Warren (CES) to offer a session with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural teaching.</p> <p>FIRE Carriers for 2024 to write personalized Acknowledgement of Country.</p> <p>Each classroom to develop their own Acknowledgement of Country</p> <p>Maintain Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum through-lines especially within Inquiry, RE and Specialist units.</p>




	<p>Publicly display our schools respect for Aboriginal people</p>	<p>FIRE Carriers Staff Students</p>	<p>First Nations authors' Literature displayed outside the staff room for students and staff to access, celebrate and engage with.</p> <p>Acknowledge Country on our website and emails as well as parent handbook and St Patrick's Annual Report</p> <p>Acknowledgement of Country displays in all classrooms, and spoken for the beginning of all whole school events. Clapping sticks and message sticks are also brought forward for display during assemblies.</p> <p>Display FIRE carriers in hallway</p> <p>Newsletter updates on school activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Days of Significance</p> <p>FIRE Carriers to create presentations to present to classes 3-6 about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Days of Significance and significant Pangerang elders</p> <p>FIRE Carriers to present Dreaming stories and or indigenous sports games to classes F-2</p>
	<p>Seek advice from CEO on cultural wisdom and seek knowledge of the local Aboriginal community</p>	<p>Principal Staff students</p>	<p>Elect and commission FIRE carriers annually</p> <p>Exhibit FIRE Carrier Flame in prominent position</p> <p>Engage with local Aboriginal organizations</p>



Core Value	Action	Responsibility	Activities
 <p>Practical Recognition and Justice Focus Area: Walk the Journey together, Put Learnings into Practice</p>	<p>Take practical measures towards Reconciliation and Justice</p>	<p>All staff</p>	<p>Whole school celebration of NAIDOC Week in school with FIRE Carrier designed activities and learning experiences.</p> <p>Acknowledge, celebrate and promote dates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significance throughout the year. Including NAIDOC week National Sorry Day and Mabo day (Student Fire Carriers to develop resources and lead)</p> <p>Continue to learn about and educate the school community of the Aboriginal story of the land on which the school is situated.</p> <p>Parents and Family members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent are invited to come to school to view, contribute or comment on our Covenant and are given the opportunity to voice concerns or intentions for their childs' education.</p> <p>Reconciliation Week or Sorry Day Liturgies provided for classes yearly.</p> <p>When possible, the school will Participate in Sandhurst Reconciliation Mass via Live Stream.</p> <p>Fly, display and maintain the Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander Flag</p>



Core Value	Action	Responsibility	Activities
 <p>Ecological and Custodian Stewardship Focus Area: Value, Connect and Protect the land, Caring for Country</p>	<p>Investigate Aboriginal cultural perspectives regarding 'caring for country' by their intimate knowledge of local terrains</p>	<p>All staff CEO</p>	<p>Staff participate in Walk on land with CES Aboriginal Network Staff to learn about the local environment about Aboriginal connections and perspectives of the land.</p> <p>Incursions and Excursions which allow for Aboriginal perspectives on the importance of preserving and protecting natural land for ecology. Including visits from CES Staff to discuss 'Caring for Country' and Winton Wetlands Educational Excursion</p> <p>Middle and Senior Teachers encouraged to use 'Young Dark Emu' by Bruce Pascoe</p>
	<p>Displaying an attitude of responsibility for the Earth as ecological stewards and custodians.</p>	<p>Students, FIRE carriers, Teachers, Principal</p>	<p>School has adopted the nargoon (Koala) as our totem and students are encouraged to build relationships with the totem promoting stewardship. Conduct a whole school activity with a focus on caring for the nargoon.</p> <p>Ongoing facilitation of Garden Gurus and River Detectives programs with our school.</p> <p>Student leaders elected annually for Sustainability Team, students will coordinate significant earth days.</p> <p>School to raise awareness of Earth Day, Clean-Up Australia Day and other national or local events that promote ecological stewardship, including Sandhurst Switches off.</p>