
ABORIGINAL EDUCATION POLICY

RATIONALE

Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Australia. Catholic Education embraces the richness and diversity which exist within the Aboriginal nations of Australia. St Maria Goretti's Catholic School is committed to maximising the learning opportunities for Aboriginal people. St Maria Goretti's Catholic School has a responsibility to create an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal people, their histories, cultures and spirituality.

PRINCIPLES

1. Aboriginal people have a rich history, culture and spirituality that can be shared with all Australians.
2. Catholic education is committed to increasing knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experience of Aboriginal people as the first peoples of Australia.
3. Catholic schools recognise that parents/guardians are the first educators of their children.
4. Catholic education is committed to collaborative decision making and capacity building with Aboriginal people, parents/guardians, caregivers, families and communities.
5. Aboriginal students in Catholic schools have the right to be provided with educational experiences comparable to all Australians whilst maintaining their cultural identity.
6. Catholic education is committed to reconciliation which promotes the principles of inclusivity, equity, justice and consultation.
7. Catholic education is committed to increasing employment and promotional opportunities for Aboriginal people

DEFINITIONS

- 1) The term 'Aboriginal' refers to the original inhabitants of Australia and includes the Torres Strait Islander people.
- 2) The term 'Aboriginal' education applies to all areas within the school including learning and teaching, reconciliation, employment, career pathways and community partnerships.
- 3) The term 'Aboriginal Education' Plan refers to schools developing a formalised approach through the implementation of a strategic action plan to address Aboriginal education in the school.
- 4) The term 'Aboriginal Nation' refers to Aboriginal society as one that is diverse, complex and sophisticated. Australia is made up of many Aboriginal Nations.

PROCEDURES

- 1) St Maria Goretti's Catholic School in consultation with the staff shall develop an Aboriginal Education Plan which is consistent with guidelines provided by national and state agreements.
- 2) St Maria Goretti's Catholic School shall integrate Aboriginal education across all areas of curriculum.
- 3) Aboriginal language and cultural education programs for use in schools shall be developed in collaboration with the Aboriginal community and will be consistent with relevant documents developed by the Catholic Education Aboriginal Committee (CEAC).
- 4) Ongoing professional learning in Aboriginal understandings shall be provided to all staff working in St Maria Goretti's Catholic School. Members of the local Aboriginal community shall be invited to be involved in the delivery of this professional learning.
- 5) St Maria Goretti's Catholic School shall actively encourage and support Aboriginal people to be represented appropriately on school decision-making committees in schools with Aboriginal students.
- 6) St Maria Goretti's Catholic School shall be fully involved in the reconciliation process through the recognition, acceptance and celebration of Aboriginal cultural traditions and values.