



FIRE Carrier Covenant

FRIENDS IGNITING RECONCILIATION EDUCATION

Est. 2021



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.

Covenants emphasise the ethos and faith belief of Catholic schools and the Social Justice response they are committed to make as part of their Christian identity. Schools expressed commitment is reflected in practical goals and actions which they strive to achieve in the year ahead.

School Covenants express in ways, specific to each school, recognition of the special contribution Aboriginal peoples and their cultures make to Australian society, their relationship and connection to the land, their present position of disadvantage and social exclusion. They declare the school and school community’s commitment to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal peoples to achieve true reconciliation and acknowledgement, by all Australians, of their rightful position within Australian society.

Our School

St Augustine’s College, Kyabram is committed to Reconciliation. 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.

Our Covenant

Our school community is involved in the continuing development of our Covenant. This Covenant has been developed by St

Augustine's College FIRE Carriers and endorsed by the leadership of the College. The FIRE Carriers Team has members from both the staff and student body.

Our goals are set out for the 2024 – 2026 school years and focus on the key areas of: Spirituality, Cultural Recognition and Awareness, Practical Reconciliation and Justice and Ecological Stewardship.

Child Safe Standards

Culturally safe environments

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety is defined as an environment that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. (Williams 2008)

The school, St Augustine's Collge, takes account of and makes reasonable efforts to accommodate for the diversity of all children in implementing the Child Safe Standards relating to following standard.

5.1 Schools establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued

Actions

1. In endorsing and documenting the following activities contained within this FIRE Carrier Covenant, St Augustine's College commits to completing or putting steps in place to complete all actions through measurable targets outlined by the dates set out in the timeline included.
2. This FIRE Carrier Covenant will be made accessible on the school's website to ensure adherence to the child safe standard referred to in the document.
3. A review at the end of each school year will be conducted and the plan will be updated and passed to the following year's Aboriginal Liaison Officer.



Spirituality

Focus Area: Learn, teach, share, grow towards understanding Aboriginal spirituality (holistic)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Prayerfully acknowledge First Nations people and history	DP: Catholic Identity and Community	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate Aboriginal prayers and symbols in liturgy • Use the message stick during Liturgy of the Word at School Masses • Learn and use the Aboriginal Our Father
Explore Aboriginal spirituality and culture to develop an understanding of social justice issues.	DP: Catholic Identity and Community Aboriginal Liaison Officer College Leadership Team	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flag ritual – proudly fly the Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags on our school grounds • Provision of the ‘ Our Common Home Incursion’ for learners in Foundation - Year 4 to learn about native animals and plants. (Using funds from Phil Billington Scholarship 2023)
Listen to Aboriginal Stories	Aboriginal Liaison Officer DP: SLPP Learning Leaders College Leadership Team	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1/2 People and Place Inquiry – Explore Dreamtime Stories • Year 1/2 Creation Religious Education unit – Explore the Rainbow Serpent • Year 3/4 Australian History Inquiry unit - Significance of country and place • Year 9 Humanities Geography - Biomes/ Environmental change & management – Exploring Indigenous land management practices, Geographies of Interconnection • Year 9 Humanities History – Colonisation/First Fleet - Indigenous Impacts, Indigenous Soldiers in WWI • Year 10 Humanities History – Civil Rights: American and Australian Civil Rights Movements • Year 10 English- Indigenous Issues for Language Analysis Unit • Unit 1/2 Biology - Unit 2 Area of Study 2 - Adaptations and diversity: the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ knowledge and perspectives in understanding adaptations of, and interdependencies between, species in Australian ecosystems. • Unit 3/4 Biology – Unit 4 Area of Study 1 - Disease challenges & strategies: The emergence of new pathogens and re-emergence of known pathogens in a globally connected world, including the impact of European arrival on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples - Unit 4 Area of Study 2- Human Change over

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
			<p>Time: Ways of using fossil and DNA evidence (mtDNA and whole genomes) to explain the migration of modern human populations around the world, including the migration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and their connection to Country and Place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 3/4 English - Text: 'Rainbow's End' - an indigenous play set in local Mooroonpa during the 1950s.
	<p>Aboriginal Liaison Officer</p> <p>DP: Catholic Identity and Community</p> <p>College Leadership Team</p>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships with local Aboriginal people and welcome them into our community to tell their stories Uncle Colin Walker (Yorta Yorta Elder) Uncle Paul Clarke (KESO) Uncle Rick Ronan Michael Chisholm (CES) Troy Firebrace (CES) Jye Warren (CES) Vanessa Byrnes (CES) Louise Levy (CES) Sonya Briggs (Yorta Yorta Elder) Park Victoria YYNAC Rumbalara Aldara Yenara (AYAC) - Roxy Matthews
		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Awareness Staff Training for all staff



Cultural Recognition and Awareness

Focus Area: Recognise cultural perspectives, demonstrate awareness

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Embrace Aboriginal stories and culture within school ceremonies /event	Aboriginal Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge Country at School Assemblies and meetings • Invite Elders to Welcome visitors to Country at significant events • Incorporate Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum. Conduct an audit into the presence and breadth of Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum F-12
	College Leadership Team	2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge Country on School website and school's printed material • Annually induct FIRE Carrier staff and students to the FIRE Carriers Team
Recognise the Traditional Owners of the Land and ensure representation of Aboriginal people	Aboriginal Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a FIRE Carrier ceremony at assembly during National Reconciliation Week to induct new FIRE Carriers • Display Aboriginal Art in our school corridors and the Library • Display the Message Stick at the Office in the front of the school
Seek advice from Aboriginal Catholic Ministry on cultural wisdom and seek knowledge of the local Aboriginal community	Aboriginal Liaison Officer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit FIRE Carrier Flame at the Office in the front of the school • Educate the school community of the Aboriginal story of the land on which the school is situated – When, Where? • Ensure Library has an Aboriginal section available to all students • Engage with local Aboriginal Co-Op, LAECG, LAN or other local groups • Celebrate National Apology Day • Fund and awareness-raise for Opening The Doors Foundation on August 4 (Term 3) 2024
	College Leadership Team	27th May – 3rd June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate National Reconciliation Week
	Whole College	4 th – 11th July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate NAIDOC Week
		4th August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day and OTDFs Birthday
		27th May – 3rd June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to artwork activities such as the Kyabram and District Hospital foyer and the Reconciliation Week banner for the Echuca Walk



Practical Reconciliation and Justice

Focus Area: Walk the journey together, put learnings into practice.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Take practical measures toward Reconciliation and justice	Aboriginal Liaison Officer	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host activities promoting awareness of Aboriginal issues or the journey toward Reconciliation during Reconciliation Week (27 May- 3 June) and or NAIDOC Week (prior if this week falls in term break)
	College Leadership Team	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embrace, connect with and listen to local Aboriginal Elders
	Whole College	27 May – 3 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraise for the Open the Doors Foundation commit to an ongoing giving commitment
		Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff representative, Aboriginal Liaison Officer to be on Sandhurst Aboriginal Education Network and the local LAN
		Term 2 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Staff PD around the AITSL Standards, Intercultural Capability Strand, Kalik - CES Aboriginal Education Policy



Ecological Stewardship

Focus Area: Ecological renewal and sustainability depends upon spiritual awareness and an attitude of responsibility – Caring for the country.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
Register as a Catholic Earthcare School	DP: Catholic Identity and Community	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formation of a staff leadership group to drive this change • Establish partnerships with Kyabram Landcare and the Shire of Campaspe • Develop a Laudato Si Action Plan
Marks Sandhurst Switches Off (Friday 25th March) and bring attention to energy conservation	DP: Catholic Identity and Community	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in Sandhurst Switches Off and Laudato Si Week
Staff professional learning around environmental stewardship and Country	DP: Catholic Identity and Community	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff PD held as part of Catholic Accreditation program and Staff Spirituality Day
Caring for country/ Our Common Home	Religious Education Teachers	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about Aboriginal Spirituality – Year 8 Religious Education, Year 9/10/11 Religious Education Programs • Host Our Common Home Incursion for Foundation - Year 4 students.

The FIRE Carrier Project is an initiative of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, the Opening the Doors Foundation and the Sandhurst Catholic Education Office, to promote and assist Reconciliation through Education in our Schools.

Our School commits to completing or putting steps in place to complete all Actions through Measurable Targets outlined above by the dates set out in the timeline above. A review at the end of the school year will be conducted and the plan will be updated and passed to the following year's FIRE Carriers.