

# MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC COLLEGE

## ABORIGINAL EDUCATION POLICY

Year Drafted: 2016  
Review: 2018

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### RATIONALE

Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Australia. Catholic education embraces the richness and diversity which exists within the Aboriginal nations of Australia. Catholic education is committed to maximising the learning opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Catholic school communities have a responsibility to create an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal people, 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' (Mandate paragraph 6).<sup>1</sup>

### DEFINITIONS:

- The term Aboriginal refers to the original inhabitants of Australia and includes the Torres Strait Islander people.
- 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.

This policy supports the very important process that recognises cultural traditions and values. It promotes the principles of inclusion, equity and justice for all members of the school community.

### PRINCIPLES:

1. All members of the Mother Teresa Catholic College community shall be provided with opportunities to have knowledge and appreciation of the identity (including the history, culture and spirituality) and the contexts in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a richness of culture, social diversity, knowledge and history from which non-Aboriginal Australia can learn.
3. Mother Teresa Catholic College therefore recognises that students within the local community may not have the opportunity to develop life experiences in a multi-cultural situation outside of the school community.
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will be provided with appropriate educational experiences that will enable them to achieve educational outcomes equitable to all Australians whilst maintaining their cultural identity.

#### PROCEDURES:

1. The Curriculum Framework shall be used by Mother Teresa Catholic College to develop and implement teaching and learning programs that will provide appropriate educational experiences for all students according to their individual needs.
2. The implementation and planning of teaching programs will be culturally inclusive and encompass appropriate Aboriginal studies and materials. Mother Teresa Catholic College recognises that Aboriginal people are a diverse group with many languages, beliefs and cultural practices. Teaching programs and practices will acknowledge and promote the diversity of Aboriginal people and their culture.
3. Where appropriate or possible, Aboriginal people from the local and wider community will be consulted and invited to have input into the delivery of Aboriginal studies at Mother Teresa Catholic College. The school community recognises that Aboriginal people are the most suitable deliverers of Aboriginal culture, spirituality, history and art and craft.
4. Mother Teresa Catholic College will provide staff with the opportunity and encouragement to develop ongoing Aboriginal cultural awareness. In particular opportunities to provide staff with local perspectives and information from the Nyoongah people will be implemented and encouraged. The school community will consult and liaise with the Catholic Education Office through a staff representative and the Aboriginal studies school community consultant.

#### Curriculum Integration

The aims of this Aboriginal Education plan can be met by addressing the cross-curriculum priorities that are embedded in the Australian Curriculum. This is done both on a whole-school basis and within the regular teaching and learning activities planned by teaching and other support staff at Mother Teresa Catholic College.

#### English and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Through English students can:

- **develop an awareness and appreciation** of, and respect for the **literature** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples including storytelling traditions (oral narrative) as well as contemporary literature.
- be taught to **develop respectful critical understandings** of the social, historical and cultural contexts associated with different uses of language and textual features
- **be exposed to several of the many languages and dialects** spoken in Australia including Aboriginal English and Yumplatok (Torres Strait Islander Creole) and that these languages may have different writing systems and oral traditions. These languages can be used to enhance enquiry and understanding of English literacy

(Based on Australian Curriculum Cross-Curriculum Priorities for English)

## Mathematics and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Through Mathematics, students can:

- **explore connections** between representations of **number and pattern** and how they relate to aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- **investigate time, place, relationships and measurement concepts** in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contexts
- **deepen their understanding** of the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through the application and evaluation of statistical data

[\(Based on Australian Curriculum Cross-Curriculum Priorities for Mathematics\)](#)

## Science and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Through Science students can:

- **develop an appreciation** for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' use of **observation using all the senses**; their **methods of prediction and hypothesis**; as well as **their use of trial and error** to make **generalizations** within specific contexts
- **develop an understanding** that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples continue to be innovative in providing significant contributions to development in science
- **investigate examples** of the complementary relationship between **traditional knowledge** and western **scientific knowledge**

[\(Based on Australian Curriculum Cross Curriculum Priorities for Science\)](#)

## History and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

Through History students can:

- **examine historical perspectives** from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewpoint
- **learn about** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples **prior to colonization** by the British
- **explore** the **nature of this contact** and **its impacts**
- **examine key policies** and political movements over the last two centuries
- **develop an awareness** of the **significant roles** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australian society

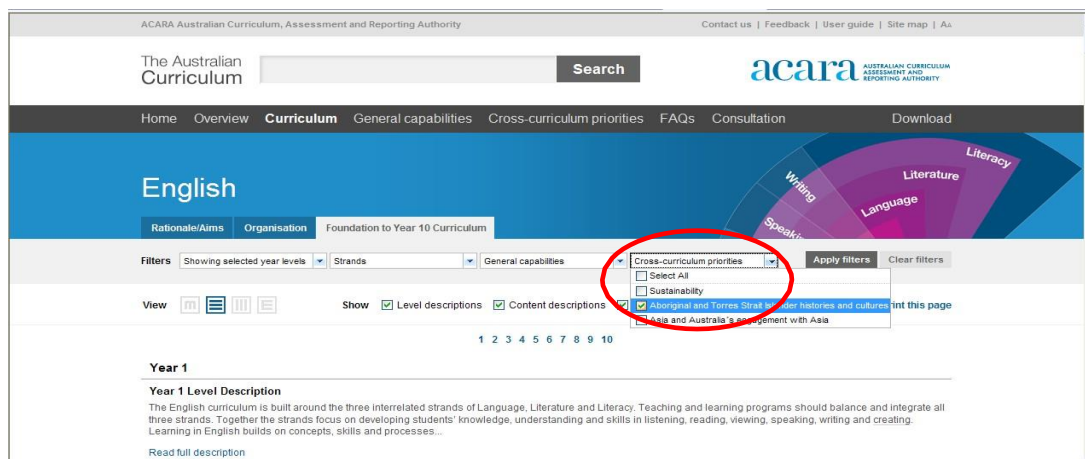
[\(Based on Australian Curriculum Cross Curriculum Priorities for History\)](#)

## Whole School Actions

Aim	Current Actions	Proposals for development
<b>Acknowledging and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge Country at Gathering/ Assemblies and school events</li> <li>Aboriginal materials available in the library</li> <li>Celebrating NAIDOC Week e.g. through selling awareness wristbands to students</li> <li>Final mass of Term 2 has a NAIDOC theme</li> <li>Teachers focus on specific lessons during NAIDOC Week</li> <li>Incursions promoting Aboriginal culture through dance and music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NAIDOC Week needs to be focused on more consistently</li> <li>Invite Elders to school events and storytellers</li> <li>Provide opportunities for Aboriginal artists (visual) to visit</li> <li>Possibly display Aboriginal artefacts/artwork etc.</li> <li>Flying the Aboriginal flag</li> </ul>
<b>Building and sustaining community school partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look at developing a relationship with a regional school with high aboriginal population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate how school can be involved with a sister school.</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting cultural understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledge in Newsletter Reconciliation Week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the traditional land on which the school is built</li> <li>Students to study units on local history that have an Aboriginal perspective</li> <li>Invite Elders to talk to staff and students about local history and cultures</li> <li>Increased focus on activities promoting Reconciliation week.</li> </ul>

## Scope and Sequence

The following scope and sequence consists of activity descriptions based on the Australian Curriculum outcome statements for each of the listed Key Learning Areas. The relevant curriculum outcome is listed in brackets. Although an attempt has been made to provide at least one activity per year level, it is not an exhaustive list. Teachers can use the filters on each page of the Australian Curriculum to find outcomes with links to the Aboriginal and Torres Straits cultures.



The screenshot shows the Australian Curriculum website interface. The 'Filters' section is expanded, and the 'Cross-curriculum priorities' dropdown menu is open. The option 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures' is selected and highlighted with a red circle. Other visible filters include 'Showing selected year levels', 'Strands', 'General capabilities', and 'Apply filters'.

	RE	English	Mathematics	Science	History
Pre-Primary		Replicate the <b>rhythms and sound patterns</b> in <b>stories, rhymes, songs</b> and <b>poems</b> from a range of cultures (ACELT1579)	Compare, order and make <b>correspondences between collections</b> , initially to 20, and explain reasoning (ACMNA289)	Daily and <b>seasonal changes</b> in our environment, including the <b>weather</b> , affect everyday life (ACSSU004)	Look at <b>different ways</b> that <b>stories of families and the past</b> are communicated. E.g. through photographs, artefacts, books, oral histories, digital media, and museums (ACHHK004)
Yr 1		Listen to, <b>recite</b> and <b>perform poems, chants, rhymes and songs</b> , imitating and inventing sound patterns including alliteration and rhyme (ACELT1585)	X	People use science in their daily lives, including when <b>caring for their environment</b> and living things (ACSHE022)	Discuss <b>differences</b> in <b>family structures</b> and roles today, and how these have <b>changed</b> or <b>remained the same</b> over time (ACHHK028)
Yr 2		Discuss <b>different texts</b> on a similar topic, identifying <b>similarities</b> and <b>differences</b> between the texts. E.g. Stories about rainfall or drought from a western and an Aboriginal point of view. (ACELY1665)	<b>Name</b> and <b>order months</b> and <b>seasons</b> (ACMMG040)  Use a <b>calendar</b> to identify the date and <b>determine the number of days in each month</b> (ACMMG041)	People use science in their daily lives, including when <b>caring for their environment</b> and living things (ACSHE035)	Discuss the <b>importance</b> today of an <b>historical site</b> of <b>cultural or spiritual significance</b> ; for example, a community building, a landmark, a war memorial (ACHHK045)
Yr 3		Discuss <b>texts</b> in which characters, events and settings are <b>portrayed in different ways</b> , and <b>speculate</b> on the authors' <b>reasons</b> (ACELT1594)	<b>Identify symmetry</b> in the environment (ACMMG066)	Using science knowledge to <b>understand the effect of their actions</b> (ACSHE051)	<b>Research</b> the <b>importance of Country and Place</b> to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who belong to <b>the local area</b> (ACHHK060)
Yr 4		<b>Make connections</b> between the ways <b>different authors</b> may represent <b>similar storylines, ideas and relationships</b> (ACELT1602)	Create <b>symmetrical patterns, pictures</b> and <b>shapes</b> with and without digital technologies (ACMMG091)	<b>Making predictions</b> and <b>describing patterns</b> and <b>relationships</b> (ACSHE061)	<b>Research</b> the nature of <b>contact between Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders and others</b> , for example, the Macassans and the Europeans, <b>and the effects of these interactions</b> on, for example families and the environment (ACHHK080)
Yr 5		<b>Understand, interpret</b> and <b>experiment</b> with <b>sound devices</b> and <b>imagery</b> , including simile, metaphor and personification, in narratives, shape <b>poetry, songs, anthems and odes</b> (ACELT1611)	Use a grid reference system to <b>describe locations</b> . Describe routes using <b>landmarks</b> and <b>directional language</b> (ACMMG113)	<b>Study Important contributions</b> to the advancement of science have been made by people from a range of cultures (ACSHE082)	<b>Examine</b> the <b>impact</b> of a <b>significant development or event</b> on a colony; for example, frontier conflict, the gold rushes, the Eureka Stockade, internal exploration, the advent of rail, the expansion of farming, drought (ACHHK095)
Yr 6		<b>Understand</b> that <b>different social</b> and geographical <b>dialects</b> or <b>accents</b> are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English (ACELA1515)	<b>Investigate</b> , with and without digital technologies, <b>angles</b> on a straight line, angles at a point and vertically opposite angles. Use results to find unknown angles (ACMMG141)	<b>Study Important contributions</b> to the advancement of science have been made by people from a range of cultures (ACSHE099)	<b>Research and compare</b> the experiences of <b>Australian democracy</b> and citizenship, including the <b>status and rights of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders</b> , migrants, women, and children. (ACHHK114)