



Mercy College Mackay
Creative Students, Catholic Values



Reconciliation
A U S T R A L I A
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

Our vision for reconciliation:

Mercy Colleges' vision for reconciliation is to achieve within our school an evident and proud Cultural identity along with outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students that are comparable with all other students. Mercy College seeks to achieve this vision by walking together with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and community on a journey of positive change, bringing understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures to the awareness of the whole school community.

In an effort to help bridge the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians we commit to creating a Culturally safe environment for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families on a sustainable basis.

Our vision will be achieved by:

- *Identifying and breaking down barriers that may prevent students and families from achieving success within our school.*
- *Forgiveness and right relationships*
- *Accepting differences*
- *Engaging students*
- *Recognizing and celebrating the positive achievements*
- *High expectations*

The proof of love is deed – Catherine McAuley



Questions? Contact our RAP Relationship Managers www.reconciliation.org.au t: 02 6273 9200 e: raps@reconciliation.org.au

Our school:

Mercy College Mackay is a Middle School catering for Catholic students in Years 8, 9 and 10. We predominantly enroll boys and girls from Catholic feeder schools in the South Mackay area, extending west into the Pioneer Valley and south to Sarina and surrounding beach settlements. We offer an outstanding vertical curriculum with both challenge and variety specifically designed to the developmental needs of early adolescents. Our belief in the educational benefits of co-curricular is evident in the extensive range of staff and community supported sports and cultural events available to our students. Current student enrolment is 620 which include 13 students of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. Our enrolment numbers are expected to grow over the next several years. Our students move on to St Patrick's College, which is a senior campus, to complete Years 11 and 12. In addition to an outstanding profile in a number of sports for both girls and boys, we offer special emphasis on technology education, language and the arts. By 2011, all students will have individual netbook computers, up to three languages will be on offer, units of sporting excellence will be part of the curriculum and instrumental music will be a particular strength. It's the pastoral care of our staff and service learning that make Mercy a great school for Mackay adolescents. Currently we are in excess of 73 staff including one Indigenous staff member.

Our RAP:

Our RAP committee was established in March 2011 and began as an initiative and planning tool for bringing greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture within our school. Our RAP working group consists of the College Principal Mr. Jim Ford, the Deputy Principal, Ms. Deb Langford, Head of Department (Languages) Mrs. Alyssa O'Sullivan, Teachers Mr. Terry Moloney, Mr. Mark O'Sullivan and Mrs. Shelly Tebao. Indigenous representatives consist of Mr. Brendan Bishop (CEO of BRB Technologies and Director of Mackay and Region Aboriginal and Islander Development Association), Ms. Florence Sailor – Regional Indigenous Education Liaison Officer Ms. Bree Sinn School Based Liaison Officer and Indigenous parents from within our school community.



1. Relationships:

Together, as custodians of the land on which this school was built upon, we endeavor to come together as one, and as equals, empowering our young people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent to strive and achieve the set goals put before them encompassing Knowledge, Culture and beliefs.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<p>Establish a committee to develop, monitor, review and refresh the RAP. This committee should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school principal (or delegate) ▪ Teachers/staff from across departments ▪ Students (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous) ▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members 	<p><i>Deputy Principal/ IELO (Indigenous Education Liaison Officer)</i></p>	<p><i>Term 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Committee established. • Four RAP Committee meetings held each year. • Minutes and 'action items' recorded for all meetings. • The RAP is reviewed and refreshed annually using Reconciliation Australia's Tracking and Reporting tool. • Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to be a part of the Mercy College RAP committee
<p>Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives to sit on existing school committees. Include parents, teachers, students and community leaders.</p>	<p>Principal</p>	<p>Term 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend invitations to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents and Community members to become participants of the Parents and Friends Association and Board. • Make P&F & Board members aware of the opportunities being offered before the representative takes seat. • Provide a mini induction of the above role to selected member/s.
<p>Develop role models, credible adults mentoring students.</p>	<p>(IELO)</p>	<p>Term 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring of students to build on pastoral care structures already in the school and consider other programs, as they become available, which are Culturally appropriate.



<p>Build relationships with our school's local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</p>	<p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>HOD's</p> <p>IELO</p> <p>Principal/ IELO</p> <p>APRE</p> <p>IELO</p> <p>VET/ IELO</p> <p>IELO/OFFICE</p>	<p>Term 2</p> <p>Term 3</p> <p>Terms 1,2,3,4</p> <p>Terms 2 &3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners or Elders speak about local history and culture for the area where the school is located at school assemblies and at staff meetings during the year and where opportunities arise within the curriculum. • Plan for Community Members to present information and become involved on aspects of the academic curriculum with a political, social, economic and vocational focus. • Visit significant cultural sites and events to support the curriculum of all students. For example, traditional lands, communities, exhibitions, festivals etc. • Partner with Indigenous Community Groups (who have the existing trust and relationships with the Community). Such groups may include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service, Mackay Youth Support Services, MARABISDA (Mackay and Region Aboriginal and Islander Development Association FOGS (Former Origin Greats)etc. • Members of Indigenous Community Groups meet with the Leadership Team of the College and the Liaison Officer. • Provide students with opportunities to engage with remote Indigenous communities as much as practicable. • Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events published in the school newsletter and on the school website. • Students have opportunities to volunteer or attend work placements at local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services/organisations. • Provide Indigenous families with paper copies of the newsletter.
<p>Develop a mutually beneficial relationship with a 'sister school' that has a high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population.</p>	<p>IELO / Deputy Principal</p>	<p>Term 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 'sister school' relationship as has been established with Japanese cultural exchanges. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Exchange of students from both Mercy College and the 'sister school' to each other's campus. (b) Exchange of teachers as practicable. (c) 'Virtual contact' within the curriculum. (d) Student and parent visit scheme and exchange activities established.



			<p>(This may include sports, cultural, learning or skills sharing excursions and activities.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a school camp to remote communities.
Develop strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from other Schools within the Mackay region.	IELO	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students visit early childhood and primary schools for Cultural exchange and mentoring of younger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
Develop strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families within our school.	IELO	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide consistent support and advocacy through our enrolment process ensuring strong support and communication from the onset. • Hold regular social events and provide other opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents to grow relationships with each other and key support staff within our school. • Meet outside the school with families when and where practicable.



2. Respect:

At Mercy College respect is at the heart of all our intentions. Through demonstrating respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture we aim to develop true understanding and dignity for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and community whilst educating the wider school community. Through these actions we will build right relationships leading to true reconciliation.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Publicly display our school's respect for, and knowledge of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, cultures and histories.	Grounds staff	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags flown or hung all year round. Plaque to be displayed at the entrance to our school which acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this school was built.
	Principal	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artifacts and paintings to be displayed in prominent positions around the school, creating a welcoming and Culturally safe atmosphere for students, parents and visitors.
	Principal/ SRC	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledgement of Country takes place at whole school assemblies, meetings and other gatherings of students and staff. Traditional Owners/ Elders perform Welcomes to Country at significant school events, e.g. the opening of a new building.
		Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Weeks celebrated within our school Representatives from the school attend the Regional NAIDOC Mass including all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. Provide the opportunity for Religion or other classes studying Indigenous studies to attend the annual Regional NAIDOC Mass.
Office	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional owners acknowledged on the school website and publications, such as newsletters/bulletins. 	
Ensure all staff at our school are culturally educated, aware and respectful.	Principal IELO	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff undertake Cultural awareness training; this training should be updated each year for new incoming staff members. Offer small sessions at staff meetings with presenters. Presenters to be introduced to whole staff. Profile students each year for better introduction of students to staff. Create a survey to determine gaps in resources or knowledge areas.



Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples perspectives in a range of curriculum areas.	HOD/IELO	Term 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples perspectives/content included in the teaching of a range of curriculum areas across every year level. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples resources section, including books by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and DVDs on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, established in the school library. All students taught by/addressed by/work with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander professional, or role model, at least once annually.
	Deputy Principal/IELO/HOD	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Create a Cultural Awareness Unit for all students- (Educating students on Australia's true history will help build reconciliation for future generations).</i> Comprehensive audit of all school programs to map Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the curriculum. Logo design for school RAP identity which can be incorporated onto school documents and or school website. Investigate relevant software and curriculum support materials for future purchase.



3. Opportunities:

The principles of natural justice would insist that all students be given the opportunity to reach their full potential. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students may require particular adjustment and support to be given such an opportunity.

We aim to provide our students with these opportunities by;

- *Cultivating an awareness and commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student opportunities throughout high school*
- *By ensuring provisions for programs, support personnel and development opportunities*
- *By insisting access to school events are not limited by financial restraints*
- *By promoting constructive parent involvement and commitment to student participation and attendance.*

The outcomes for this vision include:

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students meet numeracy, literacy benchmarks*
- *All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students being retained at school until completing year 12*
- *Conspicuous Cultural identity*
- *specific acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student achievement*
- *Particular activities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students*

	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their full potential.	IELO	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-racism objectives or statements are included within our policies (Diocesan Catholic Education Office Policy). • The needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are reflected in our school's strategic plan and budget.
	VET/ IELO	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our school supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access scholarships, financial support, career advice and mentoring.
	Library / IELO	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All our teachers have resources to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, such as <i>What Works</i> and <i>Dare to Lead</i> resources.
	IELO	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student's within our school to build better relationships with each other and Teaching staff. E.g. Regular get together's/ lunches, teacher/staff activities.
	Principal	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the Dare to Lead what works model- be active Dare to Lead members.
	Principal / IELO	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend invitations, look for opportunities and develop the skills of students,
	APRE		



		Term 4	<p>so they may become members of the Student Representative Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing school groups to increase mutual learning and Cultural awareness. • Align social justice group with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture.
Provide students with every opportunity to celebrate dates of significance within the school and as part of wider community events.	IELO VET / IELO	Term 2 Term 2,3,4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide students with the opportunity to create a meeting place within our school. • Students to be given the opportunity to participate in Former Origin Greats Careers Expo, Dilli Sabi (youth forum) , NAIDOC celebrations and/ or other community forums.
Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from other systems of schooling to be students of Mercy College.	Principal / IELO	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure positions each year for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students wanting to cross over into the Catholic sector .We set to achieve a target of 3-5% (total Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population) of overall enrolment numbers.

Employ or consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples at our school.	Principal	Term 4	<p>Optional targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People are encouraged to apply in our advertisements for school positions. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are employed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers and support staff ○ Management and ancillary staff ○ Contractors, consultants and advisers • All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are provided with training and support. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff numbers are monitored.
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4. Tracking progress and reporting			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Monitor and refresh our Reconciliation Action Plan.	IELO / RAP Committee	Term 3 //4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Reconciliation Action Plan is monitored by our RAP Committee. • Our Reconciliation Action Plan is reported on and refreshed at the start of each school year.

Contact details:

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