

# ABORIGINAL LEARNING, WELLBEING AND SAFETY ACTION PLAN



**Help for non-English speakers** - If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the office on [\(03\) 9439 9374](tel:0394399374) or email [eltham.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:eltham.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

*Note: Throughout this document the term Koorie is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait*

Eltham Primary School embraces the vision of the [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan](#) and celebrates the culture, knowledge and experiences of First Nations Peoples. We are committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that empowers Koorie students to feel valued, respected and culturally strong.

Our school has a number of measures in place to ensure our community acknowledges and appreciates the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. These measures are outlined below.

## Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Eltham Primary school, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected. We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities. Eltham Primary School uses the [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan 2016–2026](#) to guide the school's support for Aboriginal self-determination.

At Eltham Primary School:

- We equip staff, students, volunteers and the school community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students
- We adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- We address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
- We actively support participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, students and their families

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- Begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item. Use this as an opportunity to pause and reflect or open a discussion.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- Display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers and families. Share information through school newsletters, school assemblies, parent information nights.
- Strengthening curriculum content for students to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities and history through engagement with the Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan Network by:
  - Establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural and Histories Inquiry Team
  - Learning more about Aboriginal histories and cultures, both locally and across Australia.
  - Speaking with respect and confidence about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
  - Building schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal histories, cultures, perspectives, values, skills and attitudes.

### **Family and community perspectives and feedback**

We actively seek participation and feedback from Koorie students, families and Community by:

- acknowledging the existing knowledge of Koorie students and their families and seeking their feedback on decisions that affect them, and on how well we are meeting their needs, through initial enrolment meetings, Student Support Groups and during the development of Individual Education Plans
- working with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) for advice on how we can create a culturally inclusive learning environment and to build our capacity to provide support for individual Koorie students attending our school
- partnering with local indigenous groups to seek feedback and advice on existing and new actions we can take to support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal students and children in our community.

### **Training and professional development of staff**

To ensure our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to create and maintain a positive and inclusive school environment we:

- ensure staff participate in [Community Understanding and Safety Training \(CUST\)](#) training
- provide tailored training and professional development each year to build knowledge for specific staff based on any emerging or current areas of need
- ensure training and professional development equips teaching staff to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the classroom curriculum
- support teachers to map and develop teaching and learning activities within the Victorian Curriculum priorities to enable staff to build their confidence with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and to recognise opportunities to draw upon Aboriginal pedagogies and practices within their classrooms

- ensure training and professional development equips staff with an understanding and appreciation of the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Koorie children and students.

## Curriculum and learning

Eltham Primary school supports the development of high expectations and individualised learning for Koorie students and creates a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. This includes:

- implementing the Department of Education's [Koorie Education Policy](#)
- ensuring that all Koorie students have individual education plans developed in partnership with students, families, and KESOs.

## Assemblies and other school events and activities

We ensure our school events and activities acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by:

- acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners of the land on which our school is located at the start of every school assembly and meeting
- arranging Welcome to Country and smoking ceremonies by local Elders at major school events such as the opening of new buildings or gardens (where possible)
- arranging incursions and excursions, and recognising key events and anniversaries that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture

## Built and digital environment

We ensure our built environment and website demonstrates an appreciation and acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through:

- flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- displaying plaques/signs outside our main entrance that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners
- including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners on our website home page.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from the office on request

## REVIEW AND APPROVAL

We recognise that our school's practices must be regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with our families and local communities. We encourage you to contact the principal with any feedback, concerns or suggestions.

This action plan will be reviewed every two years as part of the school's review cycle, School Council consultation will also be sought if any significant changes are made.

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

<b>POLICY LAST REVIEWED</b>	<b>CONSULTATION</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE</b>
February 2023	School Staff / School Council April 2023	Principal	February 2025