

Narragunnawali  
Reconciliation in Education

**NAKRA  
GUNNA  
WALI**

# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Columbia Park Early Learning Centre



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## VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

At Columbia Park Early Learning Centre, we are committed to deepening our understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, and cultures. We strive to create meaningful opportunities for educators, children, families, and the wider community to engage in culturally responsive practices, guided by the principles of equity, inclusion, and respect. Grounded on Boonwurrung Country, we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and recognise the significance of Bunjil as a guiding cultural presence. We are dedicated to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into our daily practice, fostering children's sense of identity, belonging, and connection to Country. We are committed to building authentic and respectful relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, working in partnership to contribute to a more reconciled, inclusive, and connected society.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Columbia Park Early Learning Centre acknowledges the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our Centre stands. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and community, and honour the rich cultural heritage and knowledge that has been shared for thousands of years.

# RAP WORKING GROUP

The Working Group members listed below have confirmed their participation and therefore will be published in the RAP.

| Name            | Position                                 |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Cathy Arevalo   | Principal / Director                     |
| Emma Trezise    | Pre-service teacher                      |
| Nakita Dalton   | Assistant Manager and Educational Leader |
| Rhiannon Cross  | Staff (teaching)                         |
| Tania Desfosses | Assistant Manager and Educational Leader |



| RAP ACTIONS                                                                   | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in the Classroom                 | We are committed to engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our learning activities. Having Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in learning environments is vital when teaching about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.                                                                                                                                              |
| Early Years Learning Framework                                                | We seek out ways to connect our reconciliation vision and plans and Early Years Learning Framework principles, practices and outcomes. Our efforts mean reconciliation is embedded in everyday early learning environments.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students and Children | We commit to providing opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to celebrate their cultural identities. These opportunities positively impact the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and children, and create shared pride for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, contributions, identities and histories in the wider early learning service community. |



| RAP ACTIONS                                                        | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representation on Committees | We commit to inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, parents/carers and community members to be active representatives on our early learning service's committees. We commit to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives inform decision-making processes by respecting the experiences and knowledge that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can bring to our committees. |
| Elders and Traditional Owners Share Histories and Cultures         | We are committed to forging a meaningful and ongoing relationship with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, and people recognised in their community as Traditional Owners. We hope this relationship can be of mutual benefit, and that local Elders and Traditional Owners will feel safe, and confident, to share their historical and cultural knowledge with our staff, students and children.     |
| Cultural Responsiveness for Staff                                  | We are supported to reflect on and build our cultural responsiveness to improve our practice and best support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. We are provided with a range of opportunities to build our knowledge and understanding of our own positionality and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, contributions and cultures.                                         |



| RAP ACTIONS             | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Reconciliation Projects | <p>Our early learning service will collaborate on projects that visibly and authentically embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in learning programs and the physical environment. Through this culture of collaboration across the early learning service and with the community, we commit to creating an environment where young people, staff and community members acknowledge, respect and experience connection to the First Australians.</p> |



| RAP ACTIONS                            | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Welcome to Country                     | Where appropriate, significant events at our early learning service commence with a Welcome to Country. Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years. By incorporating these protocols into formal events and important occasions, we recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and Custodians of the Land. |
| Celebrate National Reconciliation Week | Our early learning service community celebrates National Reconciliation Week (NRW) which is held from 27 May to 3 June each year by talking about reconciliation in the classroom and around the school, and celebrating with the community. NRW is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements and to explore how each of us can join the national reconciliation effort.                    |
| Create Stakeholder List                | We will develop and maintain a stakeholder list that reflects our current and future working relationships with members of the community who are committed to working collaboratively to drive reconciliation initiatives.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



| RAP ACTIONS                                       | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Build Relationships with Community                | We commit to forming ongoing relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Our relationships will be built on mutual respect, trust and inclusiveness. We respect these relationships and the way they make opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous staff, students, children and the community. |
| Cultural Responsiveness for Students and Children | Our everyday program will have ways for children and students to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, contributions and cultures, in and outside the classroom. We will include cultural responsiveness principles our students and children have learned in the ethos of our classrooms and across our early learning service.                  |
| Family and Community Room                         | We commit to establishing a space in our early learning service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and community members to catch up and have a cup of tea, meet with staff, students and children, hold meetings or get together with other community members.                                                                                             |



| RAP ACTIONS                               | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| Teach about Reconciliation                | Our early learning service community is committed to learning about reconciliation in Australia. Having an understanding of the concept, history and progress of reconciliation is an important part of continuing the reconciliation journey. This understanding also helps to strengthen engagement with our early learning service's RAP by positioning it within the broader story of reconciliation in Australia.                               |
| Teach about Days of National Significance | We commit to incorporating nationally significant days for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and reconciliation into our curriculum to increase knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, contributions and contemporary issues. We also commit to including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives when teaching about other national days, such as 26 January (Australia Day) and ANZAC Day. |
| Explore Current Affairs and Issues        | We commit to knowing the news and being responsive to current issues significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the process of reconciliation. We will do this through delivering our curriculum, policies and procedures, and integrating it into the way our early learning service operates.                                                                                                                                |



| RAP ACTIONS                | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| Acknowledgement of Country | Our early learning service recognises the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the Country on which we live, work, learn and grow. All staff and students have the opportunity to show respect to Traditional Owners and Custodians by regularly conducting an Acknowledgement of Country at meetings and events throughout the year. |





| RAP ACTIONS                                 | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags | Our early learning service flies/displays the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag to demonstrate respect and recognition for the histories, cultures and contributions of the First Peoples of Australia. Flying or displaying the flags promotes a sense of community partnership and a commitment toward reconciliation. |
| Physical Acknowledgement of Country         | Our early learning service proudly commits to displaying a physical Acknowledgement of Country as a way of showing awareness of, and respect for, the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our early learning service is located.                                          |
| Take Action Against Racism                  | We will raise awareness of racism, its impacts and how to respond effectively when it happens. We will do this through an anti-racism strategy tailored to the needs of our early learning service.                                                                                                                               |



| RAP ACTIONS         | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| Curriculum Planning | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures are a key, ongoing part of curriculum planning, development and evaluation across all year levels and learning areas. We will review curriculum documents to find out where we include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and to what extent and where we could include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in the curriculum. |





| RAP ACTIONS               | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| Inclusive Policies        | All staff at early learning service are aware of policies referring to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and building knowledge of, and respect for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in Australia. When internal policies are reviewed and developed, we will ensure that they are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and perspectives, and that there is a plan in place to ensure that all staff comply with these policies in their daily practice. |
| Staff Engagement with RAP | Commitment to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) from all staff is essential for developing a RAP that is implemented in a meaningful and sustainable way. All staff will be involved in the ongoing development and implementation of our RAP through staff development opportunities facilitated by the RAP Working Group.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| RAP Budget Allocation     | We have set aside dedicated funds from within our budget to procure relevant goods and services that strengthen the sustainability of our RAP Actions. Staff are aware that it is important to consider remuneration for people who have been involved in RAP initiatives out of respect for the time and resources that they have contributed.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## OPPORTUNITIES



## WITH THE COMMUNITY

| RAP ACTIONS                                     | COMMITMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Celebrate RAP Progress                          | We are committed to reflecting on the progress made in the growth of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in our early learning service. We will track the progress of our RAP, continually revisit our commitments, and celebrate our achievements, while generating new ideas to develop and sustain our RAP into the future.                                             |
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages | We commit to providing students and children with a deeper knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities by learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. We acknowledge the importance of language maintenance and revitalisation efforts and will provide students and children with opportunities to learn – or learn about – the First Language of their local area. |