

Reconciliation Action Plan
The Friends' School
December 2023 - December 2025



THE FRIENDS' SCHOOL



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"For thousands of years before 1788, this country was lived in by various Aboriginal peoples, at one with the land. Through colonisation, much of their land and culture has been lost to them and their children have been taken from them; they have suffered the injustice of racism, and material, psychological and spiritual deprivation.

Can we acknowledge with sorrow the loss of life and the on-going destruction of their languages, families and communities, appreciate the depth and strength of Aboriginal beliefs and values and learn from aboriginal people and accept the gifts they have for all of us?

Can we all as Australians work towards living together as equals, with mutual understanding and respect?"

(Quakers Australia Advices and Queries #18)



VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Friends' School recognises the identities and diversity of Australian First Peoples throughout mainland Australia and the Torres Strait Islands. Our vision is to work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for a better future for all Australians.

We support the ongoing work towards equality and equity between Australian First Peoples. Through our Reconciliation Action Plan, we will actively support Voice, Treaty and Truth as a process that will provide unity and amplify the voices and empower the self-determination of Australian First Peoples. We will explore and celebrate the heritage, cultures and rights of Australian First Peoples in the School community and broader community.

We commit to meeting together in supported silence, to listen with an open heart and mind and to seek guidance. Our vision is guided by the Quaker Testimonies (Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Earthcare and Equality), calling us to be in the right relationship with all Peoples, the Land and Environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Friends' School community acknowledges Tasmanian First Peoples as the Traditional Custodians and Owners of this island lutruwita / trowunna.

As a learning community, we recognise the value of continuing First Peoples' knowledges and cultural practices, which helps inform our understanding of histories, cultures and Country.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the strength and resilience of all of Tasmanian First Peoples and we walk alongside them respectfully bearing witness.



Artwork by Friends' student Bahzi Nicholas - "The figures in my artwork are representative of time. While First Nations Australians have lived on this land for over 65,000 years, Europeans have been here for only a few centuries. This ratio is roughly equal to 300 years to 1. The tear in the paper represents the impacts of the stolen generations; the loss of culture, country and connection. Sewing this tear back together illustrates the process of reconciliation. I recognise that reconciliation is an ongoing initiative, which is why the sewing is left unfinished. The gap created by the stolen generations will never completely heal. A scar will always remain; a reminder of the past, a warning for the future."



RAP WORKING GROUP

Tracie Acreman	Staff member
Bill Avery	Staff member
Caitlyn Bakes	Staff member
Elise Chapman	Staff member
Emily Chapman-Searle	Past staff member
Marty Crerar	Past staff member
David Edmiston	Past Board member
Nelson File	Past Principal
Peter Gibson	Staff member
Gwen Henebery	Staff member
Esther Hill	Principal
Amelia Hoskin-Newell	Student
Nicola Hughes	Past staff member
Luka Johnston	Student
Emily Keeling	Staff member
Trish Mannix	Staff member
Melanie Neville	Staff member
Nicole Parums	Staff member
Hannah Schuback	Staff member
Henry Webster	Student
Melinda Young	Staff member
Fiona Zinn	Staff member

Contributors

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Joe Cairns	Staff member
Adam Chambers	Staff member
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Mark Febey	Staff member
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Amy Harris	Staff member
John Hoggart	Staff member
Jen Scharkie	Staff member
Lyn Tunbridge	Staff member
Sarah Walker	Staff member



Senior Art and First Nations Studies students with Tasmanian Aboriginal artist Julie Gough

Relationships in the Classroom

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 our 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 school community.
My Time, Our Place Framework (School Age Care)	We commit to connecting our vision and plans for reconciliation with the principles, practices and outcomes of the My Time, Our Place Framework. By forming a strong relationship between the two, reconciliation will always be a part of our everyday learning environment.

Relationships around the School

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
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.
Reconciliation Projects	Our School 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 school and with the community, we commit to creating an environment where young people, staff and community members acknowledge, respect and experience connection to Australian First Peoples.



Relationships with the Community

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Welcome to Country	Where appropriate, significant events at our school 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 in to 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 School 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.
Build Relationships with Community	We commit to building relationships with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community that are built on mutual respect, trust and inclusiveness. We value these relationships and their role in helping to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff, students, children and community members.
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 school.



Plaque naming ceremony

Respect in the Classroom

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Teach about Reconciliation	Our school 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 school's RAP by positioning it within the broader story of reconciliation in Australia.
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 school operates.

Respect around the School

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Acknowledgement of Country	Our school 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 of the Land by regularly conducting an Acknowledgement of Country at meetings and events throughout the year.
Visibly Demonstrate Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures	We commit to demonstrating our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in the physical environment of our school. We understand that making our respect visible in the learning environment through the incorporation of meaningful, relevant and culturally appropriate art, artefacts and symbolism reinforces our work toward reconciliation. It also makes our intentions and actions clear to our students, parents and the broader community.

Respect with the Community

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags	Our school flies or displays the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags as a demonstration of our pride and respect for the histories, cultures and contributions of Australia's First Peoples. Flying or displaying the flags promotes a sense of community partnership and a commitment toward reconciliation.
Physical Acknowledgement of Country	Our school 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 school is located.
RAP Launch	Our school is proud to launch our RAP at an event that recognises the efforts of the working group and celebrates our school or service's commitment to reconciliation. We will use our RAP launch event to inform the wider community about our RAP and the many different ways they can get involved and take action toward reconciliation.
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 school.



NITA Education Year 7 Connections Learning Day

Opportunities in the Classroom

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Embed Cross-curriculum Priorities	All staff from across the School are supported to understand and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures in the curriculum. Teachers will consider the cross-curriculum priorities when developing units, lesson plans and resources in all learning areas and across all year levels.
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 here we could include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in the curriculum.

Opportunities around the School

RAP ACTIONS	COMMITMENT
Inclusive Policies	All staff at school 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 the RAP	Commitment to the 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.
National Quality Standard	We commit to ensuring that our engagement with the National Quality Standard involves the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in our daily practice and programming, as well as authentic and meaningful engagement with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

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 school. 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.

The Friends' School Purpose and Concerns

The Friends' School is a coeducational Quaker school based on fundamental values such as the intrinsic worth of each person, the recognition of 'that of God' in everyone, the desirability of simplicity and the need to establish peace and justice.

As a learning community, we are concerned for the academic, cultural, physical, social, emotional and spiritual development of each person in our care.

We seek to help our students develop as people who will think clearly, act with integrity, make decisions for themselves, be sensitive to the needs of others and the environment, be strong in service and hold a global perspective.

We believe that these aims can best be achieved with the active support of all members of our School community.



Middle School Welcome to Country Ceremony





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