
Aboriginal Learning & Safety Wellbeing Policy (2023 - 2024)



<i>Date implemented</i>	2 August 2023
<i>Author</i>	Justin Hird
<i>Date to be reviewed</i>	March 2024
<i>To be reviewed by</i>	Principal
<i>References</i>	Victorian Government Schools Reference Guide
<i>Approved by</i>	Principal
<i>Date</i>	2 August 2023

Signature 

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

Castlemaine Secondary College 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.

Family and community perspectives and feedback

We actively seek participation and feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander students, families and Community by:

- acknowledging the existing knowledge of 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, during the development of Individual Education Plans and regular communication with home and Nalderun.
- 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 Nalderun 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.
- partnering with Nalderun to provide programs, attendance and engagement support for Aboriginal students as well as mentoring and support for staff and students

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
- support teachers to work in their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and Learning Area Teams (LAT's) 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.
- Regular self-reflection practice conversations between staff

Curriculum and learning

Castlemaine Secondary College 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 and Training's [Koorie Education Policy](#)
- ensuring that all Koorie students have individual education plans developed in partnership with students, families, Nalderun representatives, KESOs and the Individual Education plan coordinator.
- Castlemaine secondary college has a Memorandum of Understanding between the school and Nalderun that has been approved by the Department of Education.

Assemblies and other school events and activities

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

- acknowledging the Country and Traditional Owners of the land on which our school is located, Dja Dja Wurrung at the start of every school assembly and meeting
- arranging Welcome to Country, annually, by local Elders at major school events such as the opening of new buildings or campuses
- arranging a smoking ceremony in one of the school assemblies throughout the year.
- arranging incursions and excursions, and recognising key events and anniversaries that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- arranging Reconciliation week learning activities
- aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are involved in community programs such as Kulli Business, Warrarack, Meeting place and the First Nations Youth Leadership Forum. These are supported by the school and count as attendance for the students.

- Castlemaine Secondary college provides 30 days of CRT coverage per year to allow staff to work with students and support curriculum development that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander perspectives
- Nalderun provides one person for one day a week to assist with staff and student support.

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.
- Planning to display plaques/signs outside our main entrance that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners
- Investigate the possibility of naming our precincts traditional names and have a flora or fauna emblem linked to the name
- displaying traditional names on the maps of the school
- Including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners on our website home page
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have created murals at both ETTY St and Blakeley Road campuses.

Community feedback

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, Justin Hird, with any feedback, concerns or suggestions.

Review and approval

Plan last reviewed	August 2, 2023
Consultation	Students: August 3, 2023 Staff: August 4, 2023 Parents: August 3, 2023 School council: August 16, 2023 Nalderun: Kath Coff
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2025