



## F.I.R.E. CARRIER COVENANT EST. 2022



We recognise the special place and culture of Aboriginal peoples within Australia. We acknowledge that Aboriginal peoples have been the caretakers of this Land for more than 60,000 years. We respect their spiritual connection to Mother Earth through the Dreaming.

'An apology begins the healing process. Apology means understanding, a willingness to enter into the suffering. It implies a commitment to do more'. The late Sir Ronald Wilson, Chair of the National Inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.

We understand that practical measures need to address the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people in education, health, employment, and general opportunity.

"Reconciliation is an active pursuit – it's about getting on with what's needed and what we know to get the results we all want, and that's a mixture of measures that target the body, the mind and the spirit." Mick Dodson, Australian of the Year, National Press Club address, 17 February 2009

True Reconciliation requires national and local solutions achieved through positive and purposeful partnerships not just for today but for tomorrow. We work for Reconciliation, in partnership with those who believe that there can be an alternative to the present order.

### **Our School**

St Augustine's Primary School, Wodonga is committed to Reconciliation and sees it as the process of bridging the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians due to events in our history and the ongoing injustices in our contemporary society. Reconciliation is a way of strengthening lines of communication and recognising the integrity and dignity of all parties.

### **Our Covenant**

At St Augustine's Primary School, we recognise the special place and culture of Aboriginal peoples within Australia. We acknowledge that Aboriginal peoples have been the caretakers of this land for more than 60,000 years. We respect their spiritual connection to Mother Earth through the Dreaming.

We understand that practical measures need to address the disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal people in education, health, employment, and general opportunity.

As a school community, we will continually strive for Reconciliation of our nation through the lens of the three core values of the Fire Carrier program: Spirituality, Practical Reconciliation and Justice, and Cultural

## Recognition and Awareness.

We will strive to ignite a deeper awareness, respect and understanding of our First Nations People. We will do this by educating our school community and broader community in our shared Aboriginal history, present issues and significant dates, and future hopes.

Our covenant has been developed by the St Augustine's Primary school staff, with its school community as its primary focus. The Sandhurst Catholic Education Office – Indigenous Education Offices helped by giving us ideas for Reconciliation in our local community. Students in our school range from Foundation to Year Six.

The Fire Carrier Project is an initiative of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, the Opening the Doors Foundation and the Sandhurst CEO to promote and assist Reconciliation through Education in Victorian Schools.

St Augustine's Primary School, Wodonga commits to completing or putting steps in place to complete all Actions through the Measurable Targets outlines below. These will be completed by the dates set out in the timeline. A review at the end of the 2022 school year will be conducted and the plan will be updated and passed on to the following year's FIRE Carrier at the Opening School Mass.

Action	Person	Timeline	Suggested Activities/Resources
<b>Spirituality</b>			
<i>Focus Area: Learn, Teach, Share, grow towards understanding Aboriginal Spirituality (holistic)</i>			
Through Prayer and knowledge gain/engage a deeper awareness of justice issues	All staff	Ongoing	Continue to incorporate Aboriginal prayers and symbols in liturgy by using the message stick during school masses.  Learn and use the Aboriginal Our Father for the opening of the school year mass, so that it may be used by community at other year levels
Explore the significance of spirituality in Aboriginal art,	5/6 Team	Ongoing	Use Artwork purchased for the school.
	5/6 Team	Ongoing	Investigate possible resources to purchase for use in the Grade 5/6 Religious Education Program, to break open the Indigenous perspectives.
	Amber Marcus and Michael Chisholm	August 2022	Visit local Indigenous resource centre as possible excursion locations for 5/6 students.
<b>Cultural Recognition &amp; Awareness</b>			
<i>Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness</i>			
Embrace Aboriginal stories and culture within school ceremonies	Students	Ongoing	Continue to Acknowledge Country at school assemblies, masses and in class at least once a week.
	Teachers	Ongoing	Maintain Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum through lines.
Publicly display our schools	Students	Ongoing	Appointment of student FIRE Carriers and be involved with the Sandhurst Diocese ceremonies

respect for Aboriginal people.	Office/REC	Ongoing	Exhibit Fire Carrier Flame in front office.
	REC/ Classroom table	Ongoing	Exhibit items of indigenous art on classroom prayer tables.
	REC/ Nominated Leader	Ongoing	Maintain and develop Indigenous Garden for use for classroom prayer and reflection ensuring that it reflects current inclusive understandings of local history. This will be opened on June 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2022.  Exhibit Indigenous cross in front office
Cultural wisdom and seek knowledge of the local Aboriginal community	All teachers	March 2022	Educate the school community about the people and land on which the school is situated
	Units	March 2022	Commemorate: National Reconciliation Week/Sorry Day – May

### Practical Reconciliation & Justice

Focus Area: Walk the Journey together, put learnings into practice

Take practice measures toward Reconciliation and Justice	Grade 6	Ongoing	Continue to fly, display and maintain the Aboriginal flag
	REL/Unit Coordinators	Annually	<p>Advertise and encourage a strong school presence in community events eg: Naidoc Week, Reconciliation Week</p> <p>Provide opportunities for families of Aboriginal students to build connections with the school, through BBQs, morning teas, guest speakers</p> <p>Display and maintain the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag Display and maintain Aboriginal Acknowledgement plaque</p> <p>Hold activities promoting awareness of Aboriginal issues or the journey toward reconciliation during Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June) and or NAIDOC Week (prior if this week falls in term break)</p> <p>Embrace, connect with and listen to local Aboriginal Elders Have a school presence in community events e.g. Diocesan School Masses, Shire of Campaspe Reconciliation Week Flag raising ceremony.</p> <p>Ensure Staff PD around the AITSL Standards, Intercultural Capability Strand, Kalik and The Reconciliation Stones.</p>

			To investigate promoting and financing our staff's involvement in the Stronger Smarter campaign and online course commencing in 2022. To encourage our Staff to be involved in the CEO Immersion in August of each year and to share their learning with the school community.
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**Ecological Stewardship**

*Focus Area: Ecological renewal and sustainability depends upon spiritual awareness and an attitude of responsibility - Caring for country*

Take practical measures to help heal the earth	School	Annually	Sandhurst Switches Off
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