



## F.I.R.E. Carrier Covenant est. 2022

### **Covenant**

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.

Covenants emphasize the ethos and faith belief of Catholic schools and the Social Justice response they are committed to make as part of their Christian identity. Schools' expressed commitment is reflected in practical goals and actions which they strive to achieve in the year ahead. School covenants express in ways, specific to each school, recognition of the special contribution Aboriginal peoples and their cultures make to Australian society, their relationship and connection to the land, their present position of disadvantage and social exclusion. They declare the school and school community's commitment to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal peoples to achieve true reconciliation and acknowledgement, by all Australians, of their rightful position within Australian society. (*firecarriers Sandhurst.pdf*)

### **Our School**

At St Francis Primary School, our vision for reconciliation is to be a place of learning and teaching that respects Aboriginal protocols, history and culture. We will have strong and mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal communities. These relationships will provide for the sharing of knowledge and ideas, and the opportunity to listen and learn from Aboriginal Australians about the past, their current circumstances, and their vision for the future. We will be a place where Aboriginal culture is respected and celebrated.



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### **Our Covenant**

Our school has a proud history of working closely with local Aboriginal communities to implement meaningful and respectful reconciliation programs into our school. We are continually liaising with the Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited Aboriginal team who have supported us with ideas for Reconciliation in our local community and who are involved in the continuing development of our Covenant.

Our covenant has been developed by staff at our school and with the support of St Mary of the Angels staff and CESL. Together we will continue to work closely with students to include their contribution to this working document.

### **CHILD SAFE STANDARDS**

#### **Culturally safe environments**

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety is defined as an environment that is safe for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders, where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. (Williams 2008) St Francis Primary School takes account of and makes reasonable efforts to accommodate for the diversity of all children in implementing the Child Safe Standards relating to following standard.

5.1 Schools must establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued

#### **Our Short Term and Long Term Targets**

##### **6 Months**

Revisit the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in our Curriculum planning  
Reestablish FIRE carrier leadership groups

##### **12 Months**

Review Indigenous perspectives resources

##### **2 Years**

All staff through the Building Confidence workshop and develop an ongoing plan for professional development through consultation with CESL staff and SMOTA



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<b>Spirituality</b>			
<b>Focus Area: Learn , Teach, Share, Grow towards understanding Aboriginal Spirituality (holistic)</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Suggested Activities/Resources</b>
To promote an understanding of Aboriginal Spirituality and make the connections with our Catholic traditions	Leadership team	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Message stick to be part of the RE display in the front office when not being used in liturgies and school events</li> <li>● The display of and use of the school Message Stick during school liturgies.</li> <li>● Recognition of country at the beginning of each week during assembly at School Board meetings and other important school functions.</li> <li>● Celebration of a whole Reconciliation Liturgy during Reconciliation Week.</li> <li>● Use of Indigenous crosses in classrooms and for sacred spaces.</li> <li>● Use of the Indigenous Creation Story and other Dreaming Stories to support relevant curriculum.</li> <li>● Teaching and using the Aboriginal “Our Father” during school liturgies during reconciliation week and beyond.</li> </ul>
	RE Leader		
	Assembly leaders/ Principal		
	RE Leader		
	Leadership team/ Classroom teachers		
	RE Leader		
Classroom teachers			



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<b>Cultural Recognition &amp; Awareness</b>			
<b>Focus Area: Recognise Cultural Perspectives, Demonstrate Awareness</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Suggested Activities / Resources</b>
<p>As a school community, we commit to being active and intentional in working together in harmony for respect, unity and reconciliation.</p> <p>Leaders to work together to promote Indigenous Perspectives and Acknowledgements in our school.</p>	<p>Grade 6 students</p> <p>Teachers</p>	<p>Daily</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flying the Indigenous Flags alongside the Australian flag each day at school.</li> <li>• The inclusion of Indigenous Perspectives across the curriculum, particularly within our Inquiry Learning and Religious Education Units.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of Country included on our school website (with our Fire Carriers Covenant).</li> <li>• Significant Aboriginal days being celebrated and acknowledged.</li> <li>• Providing at least one whole day Indigenous Cultural Day per school year for children across the school (may be cross age or multi-age learning day)</li> <li>• Engaging Aboriginal people in the school / Elders and community.</li> <li>• Providing an Aboriginal section of books and materials in the school library.</li> <li>• The use of Posters / Art Work / Aboriginal Maps around the school.</li> <li>• Continuing to promote and educate the whole school community on Aboriginal issues through school newsletters, assemblies and the school Facebook page.</li> <li>• Supporting the Senior student Fire Carrier</li> <li>• Investigate the use of Aboriginal names within the school</li> <li>• Yorta Yorta App</li> <li>• Indigenous perspectives to be an agenda item for the planning days to ensure inclusion</li> </ul>



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<b>Practical Reconciliation &amp; Justice</b>			
<b>Focus Area: Walk the Journey together, Put Learnings into Practice</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Suggested Measurable Target</b>
As a school community we commit to being active and intentional in working together in harmony for respect, unity and reconciliation.	Leadership team	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inviting elders to significant events and school celebrations.</li> <li>• Raising funds for OPENING THE DOORS FOUNDATION by Fire Carriers Leaders each year.</li> <li>• Intentional focused work with staff, school board and parent community around Aboriginal prayers / reconciliation / reflections on our attitudes / information about what we are teaching.</li> <li>• 1 staff meeting per semester dedicated to sharing of Indigenous Perspectives in learning and teaching.</li> </ul>
	Student leadership group	Term 4	
	Leadership team	Ongoing	
	Leadership team	Ongoing	



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**Ecological Stewardship.**

**Focus Area: Ecological renewal and sustainability depends upon spiritual awareness and an attitude of responsibility – Caring for country.** Fire Carrier leaders

Indigenous garden

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Suggested Measurable Target
<p>Take practical measures toward teaching and learning of how Indigenous people cared for and lived off the land, developing knowledge and skills, particularly of our Sustainability leaders and FIRE Carriers</p> <p>Empower the FIRE Carrier leaders to share the learning and message within the school</p> <p>Share the story of Totems how they are attached to the environment and what that means for us today regarding Ecological Stewardship.</p>	All staff	Ongoing	<p>Teach and learn the Indigenous way of living. Sustain learning and teaching practices Make links to Victorian curriculum. Maintain our Indigenous garden</p> <p>Sustainability leaders share learning and provide opportunities for the whole school to be engaged and immersed in particular ways to help the land and country.</p> <p>Provide learning opportunities for our Sustainability and FIRE Carrier students to grow their knowledge and understanding through senior student leadership groups and opportunities to pass on their knowledge and learning.</p> <p>Promote the understanding of Totems through engaging local indigenous leaders to speak with students and staff</p>
	All staff	Ongoing	
	Sustainability Leader	Ongoing	
	Leadership Team	Ongoing	

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

Our School commits to completing or putting steps in place to complete all Actions through Measurable Targets outlined above by the dates set out in the timeline above. A review at the end of the school year will be conducted and the plan will be updated and passed to the following year's FIRE Carrier.



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