

## **Berengarra School**

### ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Statement***

*Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359 (2022).*

Berengarra School is committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to feel valued, respected and culturally strong while embracing and celebrating the culture, knowledge and experiences of First Nations Peoples.

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.

#### **Key elements of cultural safety**

##### **Understand identity**

Identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is one part of a child or young person's identity. Like everyone, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have different life experiences and characteristics. Berengarra School recognises that each person is unique with their own characteristics, strengths and challenges.

##### **Respect culture**

Culture and identity are linked. By supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to feel strong in their identity schools also help them enjoy their cultural rights.

##### **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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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, Education Support Group (ESG) meetings, during the development of Individual Support Plans (ESP's) and through feedback to Home Group teachers and campus leaders
- Working with agencies for advice on how we can create a culturally inclusive learning environment and to build our capacity to provide support for individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attending our

school and seek feedback and advice on existing and new actions we can take to support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and children in our community. Making your school culturally safe means taking the specific action needed to keep Aboriginal children and young people safe from abuse and harm.

### **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 to build knowledge for specific staff based on any emerging or current areas of need
- Ensure training and professional development equips teaching staff to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the classroom curriculum
- Support teachers to work with curriculum leaders 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.

### **Curriculum and learning**

Berengarra School supports the development of high expectations and individualised learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and creates a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. This includes:

- Ensuring that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have Individual Support Plans (ESP) developed in partnership with students, families, and other agencies.
- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/multi-cultural/Pages/kooriesources.aspx>

### **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, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong People at the start of school graduations and full school events
- Arranging Welcome to Country by local Elders at major school events such as the opening of new buildings or campuses

## Built and digital environment

We ensure our built environment and website demonstrates an appreciation and acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through:

- Displaying plaques/signs outside our main entrance that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners
- Including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners on our website home page and email signatures.
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