



School Reconciliation Action Plan

AUGUST 2010



Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for Reconciliation has its origins in our belief in a responsibility based culture of respect, generosity and humility. Westminster School aims to achieve this by encouraging students and staff to be active citizens who are willing to embrace diversity as a source of national opportunity. Inclusivity, respect, caring, learning and cooperation are values held as important to the School community. These underpin our education and social practices as we address the concepts central to what reconciliation means to Westminster School.

We recognise the special place and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia. We understand that practical measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australian peoples in health, employment, education and general opportunity require national and local solutions achieved through positive and purposeful partnerships.

Our vision is to achieve reconciliation by respecting the special place of Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We show respect to the people, their land, their culture, their spirituality and their traditions. Our charter is to work together so that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have the same life opportunities as other students.

We work at building strong relationships between all students from diverse cultural backgrounds to assist in fostering a strong sense of community.

Our first challenge as a School lies within. Through open and rigorous dialogues we seek to support a conversation amongst our community members. From these dialogues our collective responsibility emerges. This will underpin our committed and sustained contribution to generating better outcomes for Indigenous Australians.

Our School

Westminster School is a non-selective Uniting Church, Early Learning to Year 12, coeducational, day and boarding school on 23 hectares in Marion, Adelaide on the ancestral land of the Kaurna people.

The School has grown significantly since opening in 1961 to become one of Adelaide's respected independent schools. About 1200 local, regional and international students are enrolled across all year levels. Some scholarships and bursaries are offered including scholarships for Indigenous Australian students.

Dedicated and professional staff integrate a diverse curriculum, extensive pastoral care programs and a comprehensive co-curricular program to engage every student, develop their potential and prepare them for a successful future.





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The School encourages community, both within and beyond the School gates, and actively incorporates into everyday school life the values and philosophies of the Uniting Church and Round Square, an international association of schools.

The attractive School grounds offer spacious playing fields and state of the art infrastructure. A large performing arts precinct, sports and swimming centre and a 4.5 hectare teaching farm, create hubs of constant activity.

The School continually works to develop facilities and ICTs to meet the changing needs of a futures-based education, providing the best opportunities for a wide range of students.

Our RAP

Following our acceptance as a Dare to Lead School and an approved provider under the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, a broadly based committee started working on our RAP in early 2010. This group

represented a wide range of School community members and operated with the full support of the School's management team.

An important component was consultation with local elders and other representatives of the Aboriginal communities with whom the School has relationships. The draft document was circulated and members of the School community were given the opportunity to contribute to the Westminster School Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Westminster School Reconciliation Action Plan is timely as the School looks forward to and prepares for growth in the number of Indigenous Australian students in our community.

We would like to acknowledge that the development of Westminster School's RAP was assisted by drawing upon relevant parts of other school's Reconciliation Action Plans and the RAP template both found at www.reconciliation.org.au.

1. Relationships

Relationships with Indigenous Australian Peoples and communities are the authentic underpinning of our vision for reconciliation. Such relationships improve understanding, enable us to embrace diversity and are integral to the success of our School community. These relationships will allow us to:

- promote positive understanding and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures;
- acknowledge historical events;
- develop communication with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within the community;
- counter stereotypes.

As Westminster School has a small Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, making connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities has some challenges that other schools, who have a higher Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, may not experience. However,





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this situation does not diminish Westminster School's vision for reconciliation, but rather emphasises the importance of making connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in general. The non-Indigenous Australian school population needs to be educated about the injustices of the past and how they, as a new generation, can work towards improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' present and future outcomes in life.

Westminster School has a vision to educate our non-Indigenous population to understand through education Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, create empathy and find solutions for the future. We aim to engender and foster in our students a responsibility to make the world a better place. Westminster School also has a vision to be proactive about the visibility of our own Aboriginal heritage in our local area. Creating awareness and celebrating the Aboriginal

heritage of the area is bridging the gulf between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non - Indigenous Australian peoples and the past with the present. This is about building and fostering relationships and working towards our vision for reconciliation and community harmony.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Establish a committee to develop, monitor, review and refresh the RAP. This committee should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The School Principal (or delegate) Teachers/staff from across the School A representative from the School Council Students (Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians) Indigenous Australian community members 	Principal RAP Coordinator	Semester 1 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Committee established. Four RAP Committee meetings held each year. Minutes and 'action items' recorded for all meetings. The RAP is reviewed and refreshed annually using Reconciliation Australia's Tracking and Reporting tool. Report back to School community through the e-Bulletin on the RAP as well as on any associated activities. Invite an indigenous representative of the local community to become a permanent member of the RAP Committee.
Ascertain existing knowledge and awareness of Indigenous Australian culture within the student body, the staff and the wider School community.	Heads of Senior and Preparatory Schools	Semester 2 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a student survey to ascertain existing knowledge and awareness of Indigenous Australian culture. Provide opportunities for the student voice to be articulated and heard throughout the School. Provide opportunities for students at Westminster to increase knowledge





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Build relationships with our School's local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	Directors of Activities and Learning	Semester 2 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and awareness about Indigenous Australian culture. Consider ways to ascertain information in this regard from the staff and the wider School community. Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners or Elders speak about local history and culture for the area where the School is located at School assemblies or other functions. Encourage classes to engage in visits that help engender some understanding of indigenous cultures for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Day trips in the Narrunga area. ~ Visits to Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute. ~ Aboriginal trails – Botanic Gardens, Hallett Cove, Warriparinga. ~ Students could visit Yunggallunggalla Medicinal Garden at Christies Beach High School. Ensure students are exposed to a range of Indigenous Australian perspectives – Kurna and Luritja, including both traditional Aboriginal perspectives and urban Aboriginal perspectives. Build on Indigenous Australian connections associated with service activities, e.g. with Westcare. Encourage a focus on Indigenous Australian community members in occasions such as our Holy Week activities. As a Uniting Church school investigate the potential for relationship-building through the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC). Ask organisers of school camps to develop programs that involve students visiting local Aboriginal sites or events of cultural significance, such as traditional lands, communities, exhibitions, festivals etc. Students volunteer at local Aboriginal services/organisations.





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Develop a mutually beneficial relationship with a 'sister school' that has a high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student population.	Head of Round Square Head of Senior and Preparatory Schools	Semester 2 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop work experience opportunities, both for Westminster students with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services/organisations, and for Indigenous Australian teaching students at Westminster. Round Square has the potential to be one way of developing links. Ask the Round Square Directors to investigate relationship building links. Conway's Kids is a unique opportunity to build strong links. Christmas gifts from the School community were a clear statement of the goodwill. Continue to develop the links with the Ukaka community. Provide opportunities for members of the Ukaka community to interact with the Westminster community in a range of ways. Display indigenous artwork in prominent places throughout the School. Investigate the potential for teacher and student visits and exchanges. Consider links and visits with schools such as Ukaka School, Maitland Area School, Point Pearce, Mimili Anangu School – engages in 'virtual contact': video conferencing (e.g. Skype), online chatting, Music/sport links.





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2. Respect

Respect is at the heart of our intentions at Westminster School. When challenged by difference, respect enables us to look, listen and learn about other cultures and to explore similarities and differences. True understanding will emerge from a culture of respect, generosity and humility. We continue to respect the special place of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait islander people as being the first Australians and we respect the unique contribution of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brothers and Sisters to the development of this nation.

Respect is important to Westminster School's vision for reconciliation. It is the foundation for positive relationships, supportive learning environments, valuing of people's diverse backgrounds and cultures, acknowledging and celebrating people's differences and creating an inclusive school environment.

Respect is a vital ingredient in any healthy and functional relationship. Equipping students with education and knowledge about Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will hopefully

nurture empathy and a sense of responsibility. Gaining a greater understanding will, over time, create respect for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brothers and Sisters where society can and will embrace all people from all backgrounds. We are particularly aware about this aspect of the RAP as Westminster School is a school with a large majority of Anglo Saxon heritage. Respect for all people, regardless of ethnic or indigenous Australian heritage, is always of the utmost importance. Living by this principle is crucial in the process of reconciliation which is embedded in the RAP.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Publicly display our school's respect for, and knowledge of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, cultures, spirituality and histories.	Heads of Senior and Preparatory Schools Director of Development Librarian Principal	Semester 2 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Weeks celebrated and acknowledged through assembly (and if it falls in the term break, to acknowledge it in term time). • Acknowledgement of Country takes place at the Term Commencement Assembly, significant School functions and any assemblies which have an Indigenous Australian component. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags flown on significant Australian occasions. • Traditional Owners/ Elders perform Welcomes to Country at major School events, e.g. the opening of a new building. • Traditional owners acknowledged on the School website and publications, such as newsletters/bulletins as appropriate.






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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art in School foyers. • Give consideration to the naming of buildings, facilities and grounds after significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. • Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sports people into the School to run coaching clinics for all students. • Subscribe to Koori Mail and have the copies available in the library as well other locations such as the staff common rooms and the front foyer for visitors to peruse. • Purchase of a range of contemporary resources to enhance staff awareness increasing their understanding. • Become involved in Indigenous Literacy Day. • Develop a register of past students with Indigenous heritage, encourage self-nomination. Include this information on MAZE, the School's database.
<p>Ensure all staff at our School are culturally educated, aware and respectful.</p>	<p>Director of Staff Development Librarian</p>	<p>Semester 2 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dare to Lead presentation to 100% of staff. • Organise staff to undertake cultural awareness training. • Ensure all of our teachers have access to resources to teach Indigenous students, such as What Works, Dare to Lead resources and staff and community members with specific knowledge. • Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples perspectives are included in the professional development of staff. • Audit Library resources which have Indigenous Australian content and/or are written/created by Indigenous Australian authors, and mount displays as and when appropriate. Make the list of





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples perspectives in a range of curriculum areas.	Director of Learning		<p>Indigenous Australian resources available on the Library website. Alert all staff to the list and its location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of a range of contemporary resources to enhance staff awareness increasing their understanding. • Investigate relevant software and curriculum support material for future purchase. • Support Australian Curriculum initiatives to ensure that a student's schooling contributes to an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identifies the role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians continue to play in national life. • The Australian Curriculum makes it clear that the histories, cultures, spirituality, traditions and languages of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students should be valued. One of the key aims of the literature strand is that all students will develop an awareness of, appreciation of, and respect for the literature of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including inscriptional and oral narrative traditions as well as contemporary literature. • Students will be taught that there are many languages and dialects spoken in Australia including Aboriginal English and Standard Australian English and that these languages may have different writing systems and oral traditions. Students will be taught to develop critical understandings about social, historical and cultural contexts, aesthetic qualities, and the perspectives associated with different uses of language and textual features.





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History in the Australian Curriculum includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's cultures, spiritualities and histories, and recognition of the contribution they continue to make to contemporary Australia. Investigate history of School site and provide signage to recognize the traditional owners. Consider the possibility of an Annual Poster competition for Reconciliation Week. Continue Year 3 and Year 6 units on indigenous Australians. Year 9 History has a significant unit on Indigenous Australia, in particular 10 weeks focussed on the Kaurna people. Links in Senior History to parallels with the history and situation of indigenous North American people. Include unit on Aboriginal Spirituality in Year 10 Religious and Values Education classes. Language studies in Preparatory School – Arunga/ Pitjantjatjara languages. Home Economics links such as with Indigenous Australian chefs (e.g. Mark Olive), or Bush Tucker (e.g. Wattle Seed Bread). Continue and develop the strong Indigenous Australian thread the Art Faculty has demonstrated a over several years, perhaps at its highest point in 2009's Canvas in Concert and associated Arts Festival. Encourage Indigenous Australian artists to spend time at Westminster. Indigenous Australian issues can be part of a broad range of subjects other than History, including Science and the new Wellbeing subject in





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
			<p>Year 9 which should foster such values as understanding, respect, acceptance and empathy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider ways that a positive impact can be made within our boarding community including visits by groups of boarders to regional communities. • Use Song Books and Aboriginal music in the Preparatory School. • Facilitate students experiencing relevant theatrical productions with Indigenous Australian actors and themes e.g. Windmill Theatre. • Investigate the possibility of increasing the role of Indigenous Australian perspectives in Westventure, our two-week adventure camp for Year 10 students at Point Sturt. • Investigate the potential of using the resources of Camp Coorong. • Endeavour to include activities such as the following in the curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Invite an Aboriginal elder to talk about traditions, ceremonies or connection to country. ~ Learn about who are the elders in our community. As relationships develop there may be opportunities for elders and students to meet and talk. ~ Watch a movie about Indigenous Australian history and culture such as <i>Ten Canoes</i>, <i>Rabbit-Proof Fence</i>, <i>The Tracker</i>, <i>Samson and Delilah</i> or <i>From a Sorry Proof Country to an Apology</i>. ~ Create an Indigenous Australian exhibition with input or guidance from an Indigenous leader or organisation. ~ Arrange a heritage walk with a local Indigenous Australian leader. ~ Arrange a school excursion to an Aboriginal community.
			
			





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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~ Visit the Reconciliation Australia website to find out more information about the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum. ~ Have a day of bush tucker - invite and involve local Indigenous people to help with the cooking and share aspects of their culture. ~ Hold a class debate about land rights for Indigenous Australian people. ~ Conduct a media study of press coverage about Indigenous Australia - the languages, who's quoted, whether it's fair or biased. ~ Hear about contemporary Indigenous Australian culture from a university lecturer or writer. ~ Hold Reconciliation: <i>It's All About Us</i> workshops in our school. ~ Read <i>Riding the Black Cockatoo</i> by John Danalis. • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' perspectives/content included in the teaching of a range of curriculum areas across every grade. • All students taught by/addressed by/work with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander professional, or role model, at least once annually.





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3. Opportunities

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Westminster School will provide practical measures to address the disadvantage experienced by Indigenous Australian people. We hope our experiences will light the way for others and help contribute for a positive future for Indigenous Australians. There

are many, many opportunities employed at Westminster School which are very important to our School's vision for Reconciliation. The combination of the entire suite of strategies makes for a simple yet very effective way to achieving Reconciliation. From little things big things grow...

Reconciliation is an important process in the wider community. Harmonious and civilised societies have reconciled the past wrongs and have embraced the best of both cultures into a united society – a progressive society, a compassionate society, a productive society.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their full potential.	Principal Heads of Senior and Preparatory Schools Head of Stretch Centre Head of Financial Aid Boarding staff	Semester 2 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Code of Conduct document makes implicit the need to be respectful of all people within the School and wider community. • The needs of Indigenous Australian students are considered in our School's Strategic Plan and budget. • Our School supports Indigenous Australian students to access scholarships, financial support, career advice and mentoring. This support will be provided by the Head of Financial Aid and other key members of staff and will be promoted in one on one and group sessions with Indigenous Australian Scholars. • All our teachers have support offered to them by the Head of the Stretch Centre. All teachers of Indigenous Australian students have access to Professional Development programs in regard to the way they assist students. • Anti-racism objectives or statements are included within our policies. • Additional support is provided where necessary through our Stretch Centre and Counsellor. • Individual Learning plans developed each year for our Indigenous Australian students.



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Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an approved provider under the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program through The Smith Family, the School will assist Indigenous Australian students to reach their goals. As a provider of education for students sponsored by the Conway's Kids Trust, the School continues to assist students from the Ukaka community. This involves links with Prince Alfred College, a fellow provider. Identify and arrange for Indigenous Australian students to be exposed to, and meet with, role models, e.g. older, successful Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander school or university students. Develop ways to broaden the range of experiences for Indigenous Australian boarding students by ensuring they are hosted during exeats by families within the School community. Continue to provide additional support for Indigenous Australian students in the boarding environment. Investigate the possibility of appointing an Indigenous Students Coordinator
Employ or consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at our school.	Principal	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply in our advertisements for School positions. At present there are no Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff working permanently.

4. Tracking Progress and Reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Actions and Measurable Targets
Monitor and refresh our Reconciliation Action Plan.	Principal RAP Coordinator	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Reconciliation Action Plan is monitored by our RAP Committee. Our Reconciliation Action Plan is reported on and refreshed on the anniversary of the registration on the Reconciliation Australia website.

