OAKLANDS CENTRAL SCHOOL

Peter Craft – Principal

# Aboriginal Education Policy

**Aim:**

This policy is designed to support the aims of the Department of Education Aboriginal Education and Training Policy.

The Policy highlights the need for all staff to focus on three guiding elements for its effective implementation:

• Relationships • Engagement • Ongoing Learning.

Oaklands Central School supports

* Improving the educational outcomes and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students so that they excel and achieve in every aspect of their education and training.
* Increasing knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia.
* Providing Aboriginal cultural education for all staff and education about Aboriginal Australia for all students, as it is everybody’s business.
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* collaborative decision making with Aboriginal Peoples, parents, caregivers, families and their communities.

**Rationale**

This policy ensures that there is an infusion into the curriculum of a general sensitivity to the awareness of the Aboriginal culture and society either in the form of an Aboriginal viewpoint, a viewpoint sensitive to Aboriginal society, culture and history or the infusion of Aboriginal content matter. It is also recognised that indigenous and non-indigenous students alike benefit significantly from programs that encompass aspects of the contemporary cultural heritage and lifestyle of Aboriginal peoples, as well as the historical and traditional aspects of Aboriginal history. Furthermore, indigenous students benefit greatly from culturally inclusive school environments that recognise and support their educational needs.

**Responsibility**

It is the primary responsibility of the Principal and School Executive to implement and promote this policy. All staff will support the implementation of this policy and will actively support educational activities associated with this policy, including cross curricula content in the teaching and learning programs.

**Implementation**

The following steps will be undertaken at Oaklands Central School:

* Official functions held by the school will include a Welcome to or Acknowledgement of Country as per the DoE protocols.
* Aboriginal education within our school will be consistent with the NSW Aboriginal Education and Training Policy.
* All staff will include cross curricula content from relevant syllabi that reflect Aboriginal perspectives.
* The executive team or delegated teacher(s) will have the task of coordinating and managing Aboriginal Education across the school, and to establish links with the wider community.
* Aboriginal studies will be encouraged in the curriculum at all year levels.
* Specific Aboriginal Education programs will be implemented as required.
* Specific needs of Aboriginal students will be identified and addressed through the implementation of Individual Education Plans.
* All data relating to performance of Aboriginal students, or parent involvement in schools etc. will be collected as required.
* Partnerships will be developed between the school and the community to jointly progress the standards of education, and to encourage active involvement of indigenous people in school decision-making processes.
* Strategies that promote and increase involvement of parents of Aboriginal students in school activities will be implemented.
* All students will participate in school and / or community days that celebrate our Aboriginal heritage or culture.
* School anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies will be implemented.
* All Staff will be provided with Professional Learning on a regular basis on teaching aboriginal perspectives in their KLA.
* All staff will have their build their competencies in Aboriginal Cultures (See Appendix 1).

**Supporting Policies and Documents:**

The OCS Aboriginal Education Policy will be implemented in conjunction with

* OSC Antiracism Policy.
* Welcome to / Acknowledgement of Country Protocols DoE.
* Aboriginal Education and Training – Turning Policy into Action Document.

**Appendix 1: Building Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures**

**The Policy Mandates:** ‘Aboriginal Cultural Education through professional learning and career development experiences for all staff’ Cultural Competencies.

**Cultural competence** refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures are those knowledges and skills that are required to engage respectfully with Aboriginal peoples in all settings in order to build and maintain relationships and continually improve service delivery.

**Enabling learning** pathways to build Competencies in Aboriginal Cultures Pathways are a flexible learning approach based on individual needs and understandings in the context of ongoing life-long learning.

 Ensure professional learning for all staff to build competencies in Aboriginal cultures Under Local Schools, Local Decisions, all schools are responsible for planning and providing professional learning for all staff, including in Aboriginal education, as mandated by the Aboriginal Education and Training Policy. There are numerous courses, workshops and training sessions available to build competencies in Aboriginal Cultures. In accordance with the Department’s Partnership Agreement with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, all schools are strongly encouraged to work with their local AECG to implement Connecting to Country. Connecting to Country provides participants with the opportunity to experience aspects of local Aboriginal culture, learn about local Aboriginal history and establish relationships with members of the local Aboriginal community. For more information contact the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated state office on 9550 5666. Their website can be accessed at [www.aecg.nsw.edu.au](http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au).

**Engaging Australian Professional Standards for Teachers 1.4 and 2.4** Professional learning to build competencies in Aboriginal Cultures addresses the focus areas of Australian Professional Standards for Teachers including 1.4 (Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students) and 2.4 (Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians).