

Mirniyan Primary School

Action Plan Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this plan please contact the school office

Note: Throughout this document the term Koorie is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Mirniyan Primary School embraces the vision of the [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan](#) and celebrates the culture, knowledge and experiences of First Nations Peoples. We are committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that empowers Koorie students to feel valued, respected and culturally strong.

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.

FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES AT MIRNIAYN PRIMARY SCHOOL

EMBEDDING FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES

Mirniyan Primary School sets a new benchmark for embedding First Nations perspectives in education.

- Our approach is whole school, from the stories in our classrooms to the bricks in our walls.
- We improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by affirming identity and making culture visible, valued, and central.
- We embed First Nations perspectives with Aboriginal culture, history, and knowledge woven authentically through every learning area.
- We prioritise authentic partnerships, engaging families, Elders, and community voices in decision-making.
- Our programs and facilities are designed to place First Nations knowledge at the heart of education- not as an add-on, but as the foundation.

MIRNIYAN MINIFESTO

Mirniyan Primary School was founded on a clear and enduring vision: to be a place where First Nations culture is not an addition to the story, but the foundation of it. Every aspect and element of Mirniyan, from architecture to curriculum, from partnerships to pedagogy, from school sport houses to community connections has been intentionally designed to honour the Bunurong people and the broader First Nations community and reflect deep respect for Country.

From its earliest planning stages, Mirniyan was envisioned as a living, learning space that tells the story of the land it stands on. The architecture, landscape, and design elements celebrate connection to Country through meaningful symbols, colours, and textures drawn from the local wetlands. Native gardens, yarning circles, and outdoor learning spaces create daily opportunities for students to learn on and with Country, while acknowledging the ecological and cultural significance of Bunurong land.

At Mirniyan, First Nations perspectives are woven through every layer of learning. They are not reserved for specific weeks or events but embedded across the curriculum. Students encounter the works and knowledge of First Nations authors, scientists, artists, and musicians as part of their everyday learning. In Science, this means exploring Aboriginal ecological knowledge systems; in Literacy and the Arts, it means elevating Indigenous storytelling and creative expression as central to understanding identity and belonging.

Our four Houses, Kuunh (Fire), Biik (Land), Baanh (Water), and Laak (Sky) are named in Bunurong language and represent the elements of Country. They guide our school values of Respect, Care, and Growth, providing students with a sense of pride and cultural connection that extends beyond symbolism into daily action.

Strong partnerships with local Elders, Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs), and community artists ensure that our work remains authentic, respectful, and co-created. Staff regularly participate in professional learning, such as the Bundjil's Nest Project, to deepen their cultural understanding and strengthen connections to place.

Our students are proud cultural ambassadors. They lead school tours, share the stories behind artworks and architectural choices, and celebrate knowledge of Country through assemblies, performances, and creative projects.

Mirniyan Primary School represents what it means to truly embed First Nations culture across every part of school life. We are not simply a school on Country — we are a school of Country, where every student learns, grows, and walks proudly in two worlds.

MIRNIYAN PRIMARY SCHOOL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Mirniyan Primary School acknowledges the Bunurong people as the traditional custodians of this land on which we live, work, learn, play and grow.

We acknowledge their spiritual connection to country and thank them for continuously caring for our natural environment and value the sharing of their wisdom, knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to elders past and present and to all First Nations people.

Our Mirniyan Learning Community is committed to nurturing a strong connection to country in us all and collective respect and care for our local and world environment.

OVERVIEW OF FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVES AT MIRNIYAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mirniyan Primary School will continue to honour First Nation's culture, deepen understanding, embrace and keep the story of the design principles alive. We will ensure, as a learning community,

that we continue to respect and be grateful to the Bunurong people who have always cared for and looked after country. We feel incredibly fortunate to be surrounded by a school environment that places culture and Country at the heart of our identity as we walk together towards a shared future.

Mirniyan (Mern-ee-yan) is the Bunurong word for moon.

We will commit to embedding a First Nations perspectives in all teachings and activities across the school. We will pride ourselves on developing in our students a strong connection to our natural world, our First Nation's culture and a strong commitment to sustainability.

We will investigate our local natural surrounds and embed many natural elements to our school environment as we develop and grow as a school. We will develop as a school that is closely aligned in environment and teaching approaches with our First Nation's peoples care and respect of country.

We will develop our indigenous gardens and natural spaces so our students can learn firsthand in natural spaces. We will include our school and wider community to develop a collective investment in learning about our First Nation's culture, our planets' biodiversity and encourage a firm commitment to preserving and saving our natural world. We will create a school where all are invested in educating our students and those around us about our First Nations peoples' culture and natural history, ensuring we nurture student's awe, love and wonder of the natural world and appreciation of how it contributes to our world.

We will investigate and access local natural resources to enrich our learning programs.

We will develop a strong and **embedded sustainability and First Nation's perspective** that will be woven through all our rich curriculum and visually evident throughout our school. Students will be taught about the history and culture of Australia's First Peoples as part of the teaching of the Victorian Curriculum.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES AND FEEDBACK

We actively seek participation and feedback from Koorie students, families and Community by:

- acknowledging the existing knowledge of Koorie 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, Student Support Groups, during the development of Individual Education Plans and ongoing emails to families and carers.
- working with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) for advice on how we can create a culturally inclusive learning environment and to build our capacity to provide support for individual Koorie students attending our school
- partnering with Bunurong Land Council to seek feedback and advice on existing and new actions we can take to support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal students and children in our community.
- Families and the school community are invited to have a say in the development and review of child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices through website, newsletters, information sessions and school council.

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
- have staff as members of the school network Marrung Community of Practice
- provide tailored training and professional development each year to build knowledge for specific staff based on any emerging or current areas of need, including attending Bunjil's Nest festival
- ensure training and professional development equips teaching staff to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the classroom curriculum
- support teachers to work in their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) 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 Koorie children and students.
- Staff are encouraged to participate in local Cultural programs and events, including attending Bunjil's Nest festival and Echoes of Country.

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

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

- implementing the Department of Education's [Koorie Education Policy](#)
- ensuring that all Koorie students have individual education plans developed in partnership with students, families, and KESOs.
- Student Support Group (SSG) meetings held for Koorie students each term/semester or more frequently if required
- Further engage the KESOs to work with the school and support families where needed.
- We have a strong and embedded First Nations lens that is woven through all of our rich curriculum and visually evident throughout our school. Students are taught about the history and culture of Australia's First Peoples as part of the teaching of the Victorian Curriculum through all curriculum areas and explicitly in Inquiry programs. Students are explicitly taught about First Nation's history and culture including authors, artists, actors and spirit stars etc. First nations literature and artworks are used for Inquiry units.
- First nation's cultural art works on display throughout the school and grounds
- NAIDOC Week is celebrated annually with a range of age-appropriate cultural activities.
- Recognition days such as Sorry Day are a part of the curriculum and communicated to the school community through newsletters and other communication channels.
- Display of Aboriginal Nations map of Australia and map of languages.

- Using Early Years Koorie Literacy and Numeracy support funding to provide additional learning resources (including human resources) to support the student in line with the goals and targets of their IEP
- Being mindful of cultural sensitivity when presenting lessons and activities, for example considering that hearing recordings, seeing images or the names of deceased persons may cause sadness or distress for Koorie students and, in some cases, offend against strongly.
- speaking with respect and confidence about Koorie culture, knowledge systems and people.
- implementing the Koorie Education Policy to create a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Koorie cultures and identities

ASSEMBLIES AND OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

We ensure our school events and activities acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by:

- Student leaders open every assembly with an Acknowledgement to Country
- Staff acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners of the land on which our school is located, Bunurong land at the start of each meeting
- Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony by local Bunurong Elders at the school opening ceremony and major school events
- arranging incursions and excursions, and recognising key events and anniversaries that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture

VOLUNTEERS

We ensure our volunteers acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students. The strategies for managing and training volunteers are outlined in our Volunteers Policy.

BUILT AND DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

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

- The Aboriginal flag is permanently on display at the entrance to the school office and in the gym along with the Australian and Torres Strait Islander flags – they are held within rocks from the Bunurong land that the school was built on.
- flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- displaying a plaque outside our main entrance that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners on a Bunurong rock
- including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners and detailed information about our local Bunurong country that our school site is built on, on our website page.
- acknowledgement and continual celebration of Bunurong cultural associations to the land the school is situated on
- Many parts of this region hold strong cultural associations for the First Peoples and have formed important places for social and ceremonial gatherings, trade, initiation, marriage and lore business for tens of thousands of years.

- The school's landscaping, design, colour, texture and materiality provide hints or memories of the gathering spaces and the connecting trails once used by the Bunurong people.
- Our school is built on Bunurong wetlands country. Our school interior and exterior palette through warm neutrals and earthy details incorporates the mood and feel of the Bunurong wetlands landscape.
- The interiors of our school welcome students, teachers, parents and community, to embrace the history and caring of country through shared experience and paying respect to those custodians past, present and future.
- Natural trails and connections are made between outdoor and indoor learning environments.
- The school landscape acknowledges First Nations history and connection to the land.
- A yarning circle with bluestone boulders/seats will be arranged in a circular/spiral form for small group meeting and gathering spaces to share and learn from the collective group, build respectful relationships and pass on knowledge.
- Our student HOUSES are named in Bunurong language:

Fire: Kuunh

Land: Biik

Water: Baanh

Sky: Laak

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

We recognise that our school's practices must be regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with our families and local communities. We encourage you to contact the school office with any feedback, concerns or suggestions.

Review and approval

Plan last reviewed	August 2026
Consultation	School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2028– to ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years thereafter