

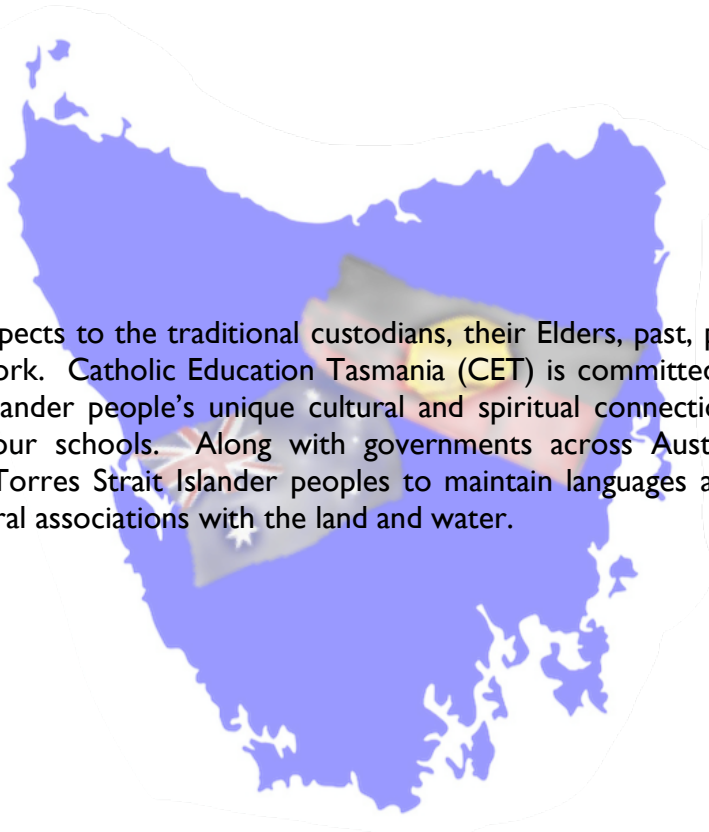


Catholic
Education
Commission
Tasmania

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POLICY

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We pay our respects to the traditional custodians, their Elders, past, present and future of this land on which we work. Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s unique cultural and spiritual connections and the rich contribution they bring to our schools. Along with governments across Australia, we affirm the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to maintain languages and cultures and acknowledge their deep cultural associations with the land and water.

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I AUTHORITY AND APPLICATION

Date of approval	22 November 2018
Source of approval	Catholic Education Commission Tasmania (CECT)
Start date	1 January 2019
Date of review	January 2021
Date of amendments	N/A
Previous policies replaced by this Policy	N/A

SIGNED:

Chair of the CECT

DATE:

12 December 2018

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2 RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with the following related documents:

Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Archbishop's Charter for Catholic Schools in Tasmania• Equity Policy• Pastoral Care Policy• Enrolment Policy• National Indigenous Reform Agreement (NIRA)
Applicable Laws	All laws in connection with the carrying out of work or the Workplace including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)</i>• <i>Education Act 2016 (Tas)</i>• <i>Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)</i>

3 PURPOSE

The Catholic Education Commission Tasmania (CECT) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy has been developed in consultation with Aboriginal Elders and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Communities to support all Catholic Schools and Colleges in Tasmania to be aspirational in working towards the following key strategies:

- a) Acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the custodians of the lands upon which our Catholic schools stand;
- b) Acknowledging and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's histories, values, language and cultures;
- c) Developing respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and families;
- d) Having systems in place that are accountable, equitable, transparent and responsive to the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families
- e) Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, culture and contribution to Catholic education;
- f) Promoting equity of access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to educational services within Catholic education;
- g) Promoting and celebrating educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, particularly in literacy and numeracy and;
- h) Ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and content are taught across the curriculum.
- i) Supporting all school staff, students and school communities to understand, value and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultural understanding.

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4 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:**

Any person who -

- Is of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
 - Identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and
 - Is recognised by the Indigenous community in which they live as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- **Annual plans:** A formalised, whole school plan to address the key federal priority areas for Aboriginal Education. These plans also encompass priority areas for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
 - **Archdiocesan School** - the 35 Catholic schools and colleges owned by the Roman Catholic Church Corporation of the Archdiocese of Hobart.
 - **CECT** – the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania.
 - **CET** - Catholic Education Tasmania is the collective term for the Catholic Education Commission Tasmania, Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, Archdiocesan Schools and Congregations Schools.
 - **Congregational School** - the 3 Catholic schools run by religious institutions in Tasmania (Dominic College, St Francis Flexible Learning Centre and St Virgil’s College).
 - **Country** - ‘Tasmanian Aboriginal people have a distinctive and age-old connection with their ancestral lands and waters. When an Aboriginal person talks of ‘Country’; this encompasses not only the land and water but also culture, knowledge, and the environment’.¹
 - **Histories and cultures:** Inclusive of the unique values, language and spirituality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
 - **TCEO** – the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office.

5 COVERAGE

This Policy covers and applies to workers in relation to:

- a) All Archdiocesan Schools, Congregational Schools, the TCEO and CECT operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart as Catholic Education Tasmania.
- b) Cultural tutors.

6 OBLIGATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

- The TCEO is to distribute funding to schools and colleges under a system needs-based funding allocation model. These funds are retained by the TCEO and allocated to and on behalf of schools and colleges as follows:
- Schools and colleges are provided with per capita grants for every Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander student
- Employment of Education Officers working in and on behalf of schools and colleges

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- Development of system-wide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs
- System-wide analysis of the data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

¹http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/oaafurther_information/acknowledgements_and_welcome_to_country

Schools and Colleges are expected to:

- Meet all funding, reporting and accountability requirements.
- Acknowledge, respect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, values, language and culture.
- Identify a staff member to fulfil the role of key teacher, and Aboriginal Student Support Teacher (ASST).
- Fulfil obligations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students as outlined in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy. Programs will demonstrate evidence of improvement in the educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Be culturally responsive: actively seek information on local Aboriginal history, culture and heritage, engage with, and develop effective partnerships with the local Aboriginal people.
- Utilise funding to implement programs, initiatives and school-based support for the improvement in outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. These plans will be outlined in both the Annual and school Effectiveness/Improvement Plan.
- Facilitate school-based and community based reconciliation initiatives.
- Release a key teacher or ASST to attend network meetings with an expectation that the learning be shared collaboratively at school level.
- Seek and utilise advice and support from Education Officers or Manager: Programs.
- Ensure individual teaching and professional staff actively educate themselves on the local Aboriginal history, culture and heritage to be culturally responsive, and are able to engage with, and develop effective partnerships with the local Aboriginal people.
- Prioritise the analysis, communication and discussion of systematically collected data to improve student outcomes.

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7 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- Catholic Education Tasmania recognises that parents/carers are the first educators of their children;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rich histories and culture that may be shared with all Australians;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to an equitable education that improves and strengthens the achievement of educational outcomes and celebrates cultural identity;
- Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to increasing awareness, knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities;
- Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to reconciliation, promoting the principals of truth, justice, equity and inclusivity; and
- Catholic Education Tasmania is committed to encouraging employment and promotional opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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