

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young People Framework

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Introduction

BlendED is committed to providing inclusive, culturally safe and high-quality educational experiences that support the learning, wellbeing, engagement and achievement of all young people.

Grounded in its Catholic identity and commitment to human dignity, social justice and inclusion, EREA BlendED National Ltd ('BlendED') affirms the right of every young person to equitable access to education, safety, belonging and opportunity. This commitment calls the School to actively remove barriers to participation and to support young people who experience disadvantage.

BlendED recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians and respects their continuing connection to Country, land, waters, cultures, languages and communities. As a Special Assistance School, BlendED is committed to culturally safe, inclusive and relational learning environments that support the engagement, wellbeing and achievement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

This Framework sits within the School's inclusive educational approach, as articulated in the BlendED Education Framework, and guides culturally responsive practice, respectful partnerships with families and communities, and the implementation of supports that enable every young person to participate, belong and achieve.

Purpose

This Framework outlines how BlendED supports the learning, wellbeing, safety and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people through culturally responsive teaching, inclusive educational practices and appropriate adjustments.

The Framework promotes cultural safety and inclusion, supports respectful partnerships with families, communities and relevant organisations, outlines the School's approach to preventing and responding to racism, bullying and discrimination, and provides a consistent foundation for meeting applicable registration, child safety and other regulatory requirements across all BlendED schools.

Scope

This Framework applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors engaged by BlendED and applies across all School environments, including physical and online learning environments, and all activities conducted by or on behalf of the School.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring the School has systems supporting culturally safe and inclusive practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people; and
- overseeing the School's capacity to implement and evidence inclusive curriculum planning and teaching practice aligned to applicable registration, accreditation and child safety requirements.

Principal

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring whole-school leadership and practices promote cultural safety, inclusion, equity and non-discrimination;
- ensuring staff receive appropriate training, guidance and support to implement culturally responsive practices, including in online learning environments;
- ensuring culturally unsafe behaviour, including racism, bullying and discrimination, is addressed promptly, consistently and appropriately;
- ensuring engagement processes meet the needs of young people and families, including facilitating access to interpreter or other support services where required;
- monitoring attendance, engagement, wellbeing and learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and responding to identified needs and trends; and
- supporting respectful partnerships with families, communities and relevant organisations to enhance learning, wellbeing and cultural safety.

Curriculum Leader / Delegate (where appointed)

The Curriculum Leader (or delegate) is responsible for:

- supporting teachers to plan and deliver culturally responsive teaching and appropriate adjustments;
- promoting the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, histories, cultures and knowledge within curriculum and learning programs;
- supporting staff to implement inclusive teaching practices that improve engagement, participation and achievement; and
- coordinating the collection and review of evidence to support continuous improvement and compliance requirements.

All Staff (including volunteers and contractors)

All staff are responsible for:

- demonstrating culturally respectful and inclusive behaviour in all interactions;
- contributing to learning environments that are culturally safe, welcoming and supportive;
- taking reasonable steps to prevent, identify and respond to racism, bias, discrimination and culturally unsafe conduct;
- promoting the dignity, participation and voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people; and
- reporting concerns in accordance with School procedures.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- designing and implementing teaching practices that recognise and respond to the cultural identities, experiences, strengths and learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people;
- providing opportunities for young people to develop understanding of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and perspectives;

- implementing agreed adjustments and supports documented in Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and Individual Wellbeing Plans (IWPs), where applicable;
- creating and maintaining culturally safe, respectful and inclusive learning environments, including online learning environments; and
- engaging with young people and families in ways that support participation, belonging and positive educational outcomes.

Framework Statement

BlendED is committed to fostering culturally safe, inclusive and responsive learning environments that affirm the dignity, identity, voice and belonging of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

The School values and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages, knowledges and continuing connections to Country, land, waters and communities. BlendED is committed to promoting equity, participation, wellbeing and educational success through culturally responsive practice, inclusive teaching, respectful partnerships with families and communities, and meaningful opportunities for young person voice and participation.

The School actively works to prevent and respond to racism, bullying, discrimination and culturally unsafe behaviour, and seeks to create environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people feel safe, respected, empowered and supported to achieve their full potential.

Procedures

Inclusive Curriculum Planning and Teaching

BlendED is committed to planning and delivering curriculum and teaching that promotes access, participation, engagement and achievement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people through culturally responsive practice and appropriate adjustments.

The School will utilise inclusive approaches outlined in the BlendED Education Framework, including predictable routines, trauma-informed practices, differentiated pathways and strengths-based approaches. Where appropriate, adjustments and supports will be documented and reviewed through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and Individual Wellbeing Plans (IWPs) in partnership with young people and their families/carers.

The School will seek to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, perspectives and knowledges within learning programs in ways that are respectful, authentic and relevant.

Learning Support, Attendance and Progress Monitoring

BlendED is committed to identifying learning, wellbeing and engagement needs early and implementing targeted supports to maximise participation and achievement.

The School will monitor attendance, engagement, wellbeing and academic progress, provide appropriate interventions and supports, including literacy and numeracy support where required, and use available data and feedback to inform ongoing improvement and responsive practice.

Cultural Safety and Respectful Relationships (Physical and Online)

BlendED is committed to creating culturally safe, inclusive and welcoming environments in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people feel respected, valued and connected.

The School will promote a culture of belonging, explicitly model and teach respectful relationships, conflict resolution and help-seeking behaviours, and maintain safe and supportive physical and online learning environments. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identities, cultures and contributions will be acknowledged and respected across the School community.

Responding to Racism, Bullying, Discrimination and Culturally Unsafe Behaviour

BlendED has zero tolerance for racism, discrimination, bullying and culturally unsafe behaviour.

Where such behaviour is identified or reported, the School will respond in a timely, coordinated and trauma-informed manner to reduce harm, restore safety and support those affected. Incidents will be reported, documented, appropriately investigated and followed up in accordance with School processes, with a focus on learning, accountability and continuous improvement.

Engagement with Families, Community and External Organisations

BlendED recognises the important role of families, communities and external organisations in supporting young people's learning, wellbeing and cultural identity.

The School will foster respectful, collaborative and culturally responsive partnerships with parents/guardians, families, community members and relevant organisations. Communication and engagement processes will be accessible, inclusive and designed to encourage meaningful participation in educational planning and decision-making.

Young Person Voice and Participation

BlendED values the voices, experiences and perspectives of young people and is committed to providing meaningful opportunities for participation in decisions that affect them.

The School will implement young person voice processes in accordance with the Young Person Voice Implementation Guide and will provide accessible opportunities for feedback, consultation and participation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people will be supported to participate in culturally safe and culturally responsive ways.

Staff Capability and Professional Learning

BlendED is committed to building staff capability to support culturally safe, inclusive and responsive educational environments.

The School will provide ongoing professional learning and resources to strengthen staff understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, perspectives and culturally responsive practices. Appropriate records of training, implementation and continuous improvement activities will be maintained.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young Person	A young person who identifies as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Culturally Safe/Cultural Safety	"Cultural safety" or a "culturally safe environment" goes beyond cultural awareness (knowledge and understanding of cultural differences and histories) and cultural competence (culturally responsive behaviour). It involves creating an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are respected, valued and empowered to express and maintain their cultural identity, participate fully in educational and community life, and contribute to decision-making in ways that are meaningful and safe.
Culturally Responsive Practice	Teaching that recognises and responds to young people's cultural identities, histories, languages, experiences and strengths through curriculum, pedagogy, learning environments and relationships.
Individual Learning Plan	A documented plan that outlines a young person's learning goals, strengths, support strategies, adjustments and agreed actions to support access, participation, engagement and progress.
Individual Wellbeing Plan	A documented plan that outlines wellbeing goals, identified support strategies, risk management measures and agreed actions to support a young person's engagement, safety, wellbeing and participation.

Source of Obligation

This Framework supports BlendED's commitment to providing culturally safe, inclusive and equitable learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

The Framework supports compliance with applicable education, registration, accreditation and child safety requirements in the jurisdictions in which BlendED operates, including requirements administered by relevant government authorities, school registration bodies and child safety regulators.

In particular, this Framework supports BlendED's obligations relating to:

- education legislation and regulatory requirements;
- non-government school registration and accreditation requirements;
- child safe legislation, standards and principles;
- anti-discrimination, human rights and equal opportunity legislation;
- child protection obligations; and
- other legal and regulatory requirements relating to the safety, wellbeing, participation and education of young people.

This Framework also supports the implementation of applicable Child Safe Standards and obligations relating to cultural safety, inclusion, participation and wellbeing.

This Framework should be read in conjunction with other BlendED frameworks, guidelines, procedures and operational practices that support implementation, continuous improvement and compliance across School environments.

References

- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures Cross-Curriculum Priority
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

- Australian Human Rights Commission, Cultural Safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Young People
- Commonwealth of Australia, Keeping Our Kids Safe: Cultural Safety and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Reconciliation Australia resources and guidance
- Relevant education, registration, accreditation and child safety requirements in the jurisdictions in which Blended operates

Related Policies and Documents

- Education Framework
- Positive Behaviour Management Framework
- Young Person Voice Implementation Guidelines
- Young Person Agreement (Young Person Code of Conduct)
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- Individual Wellbeing Plan (IWP)
- Safety Incident Reports
- Case Notes (Chronicle entries in Compass)
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy
- Complaint Handling Guidelines and Procedures

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