

# Cultural Safety Policy

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<b>Purpose:</b>	<p>To demonstrate our commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are and feel safe to express their culture. And enjoy their cultural rights that are encouraged and actively supported.</p> <p>To ensure all staff, contractors, volunteers participate in Cultural Safety Training.</p>
<b>Scope:</b>	<p>School Board, staff, students and their families, volunteers and the school community</p>
<b>Implemented by:</b>	<p>Principal (Child Safety Officer)</p>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<p>CIC Board</p>
<b>Reviewed:</b>	<p>Annually, after an incident, as regulatory changes arise or improvements are identified. The review process will include input from students, families and the school community.</p>
<b>Communicated via:</b>	<p>CIC Website, Staff Handbook, Parent Handbook, Policies and Procedures Manual</p>

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## Overview

As a child safe organisation we value diversity in our community, expect engagement from families, and ensure we have practices in place to allow all children and young people to be safe and feel safe to express their culture. School staff, students, volunteers and the school community will acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture We will ensure that staff, students, volunteers and the school community understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal Children. Corner Inlet College is focused on the safety and wellbeing of its students at all times and has a zero tolerance approach to racism, child abuse and harm.

## C.4.1.viii Cultural\_Safety\_Policy\_CIC

Effective from:18/08/2024

Review due: 18/08/2025



Corner Inlet College is committed to implementing and sustaining our Cultural Safety Policy using our Bullying and Harassment Policy and Behaviour Management Policy Frameworks to address racism, racial discrimination or racial slurs.

### Cultural Safety Training

All Corner Inlet College staff, contractors and volunteers must participate in the Community Understanding and Safety Training (CUST Training)[CUST: Online Information Series – VAEAI](#)

Culture is all around us and expressed in many ways. If you are raised and living in a place where your identity fits in with the dominant culture, you might not necessarily recognise your culture because it is all around you. Similarly, you often won't 'see' culture until it is different from your own practices, and what you are used to.

Cultural safety is feeling safe in a particular way that relates to someone's individual culture. **It involves a person's culture being understood and respected.**

The Commission for Children and Young People developed a definition of cultural safety specific to the context of abuse prevention in organisations:

**Cultural safety for an Aboriginal child means they experience a safe, nurturing, and positive environment, where their unique identity is respected without attack, challenge or denial. In this environment, their voice is heard and valued, and they are free to explore and express themselves, their culture, views and needs.**

### Geographic Context

Corner Inlet College is located on land that has no formally registered Recognised Aboriginal Parties (RAP). Instead, we recognise two groups who occupy this area, these groups are the Gunaï/Kurnai people to our East who are formally represented by Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLAWAC). To our west are the Brataulung / Bunurong people who are formally represented by Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.

### Culturally safe environments. Child Safe Standard 1.

**Schools must establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued.**

Corner Inlet College is committed to establishing and maintaining culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued.

- **Respecting Aboriginal children and young people’s diverse and unique identities**

Identity means different things to different people – there may be common aspects, but identity is personal. Everyone is unique, so our identity is unique to each of us. Child Safe To establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued, we need to understand the importance of factors such as culture, Country, community and family ties to Aboriginal children and young people, and how they connect with one another to create and support each Aboriginal child and young person’s individual identity. Refer to Figure 1: Model of social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal people

- **Informed and Engaged Leadership**

Creating a culturally safe environment in an organisation needs the support and engagement of leadership. Leaders must model awareness about the importance of cultural safety and show they are genuinely committed to change how the organisation operates to create this essential element of child safety.

When leaders model best practice, organisations are better positioned to make meaningful change to create a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children and young people.

- **Creating Opportunities to Learn About and Expressing Culture**

Corner Inlet College will support Aboriginal students to learn about and express their culture and provide an environment where staff and students understand and support their culture and their need to express this. Events such as cultural days, sporting carnivals and other events bring community members together. Similarly, events around NAIDOC Week also represent opportunities to come together and celebrate resilience and pride.

Corner Inlet College staff and students will actively participate in the following significant cultural events and will wherever appropriate invite family members to the school to contribute to events. CIC will invite families to speak about and showcase their culture and support staff in their education about the history and culture of local Aboriginal people and the truth-telling of their lands and waters surrounding Corner Inlet. Refer to Figure 2: A brief history of Aboriginal culture and the impact of invasion

- Welcome and Smoking Ceremony: 28<sup>th</sup> January, 2025. (27<sup>th</sup> January, 2026).
- Harmony Day: 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2025.
- National Recognition Week: 27<sup>th</sup> May – 3<sup>rd</sup> June
- NAIDOC week: 6<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2025.
- Indigenous Literacy Day: 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2025. (2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2026).

- **Identity and Recognition**

CIC will work with local Aboriginal groups to explore totems and create these in our gardens, raise the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, and display cultural items within the front office entrance as a steps to ensure our school looks and feels welcoming. Items will include: AIATSIS map of Indigenous Australia, the Languages Map from Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, and drawings and depictions of local Aboriginal groups managing the lands and waters of Corner Inlet pre-settlement.

CIC commit to taking appropriate steps to name our school houses using three Aboriginal names for animals living in water, on land, and in the skies. We will also take appropriate steps to name our classrooms in a culturally acceptable way to honour local Aboriginal places.

### **Curriculum**

Corner Inlet College will ensure that students are encouraged and actively supported to express and enjoy their cultural rights by including specific sessions regarding the history of Aboriginal people in our area throughout our curriculum. Wherever possible families and community members will be invited to contribute to this and speak to students about their perspectives and experiences.

Cross-disciplinary opportunities will promote students from Aboriginal backgrounds to explore their identities and cultures and also give other students the opportunity to explore Aboriginal culture through their negotiated projects.

- **Knowledge Sharing**

Ensuring that all staff attend education and training regarding Aboriginal culture and identity and its importance to young people. Wherever possible this will be achieved with the input and support of the local Aboriginal community.

In consultation with our local Aboriginal groups, there will be a minimum of one formal professional development session for all staff each year focussing on Aboriginal culture and identity.

Ensuring all staff participate in the process of self-reflection to help staff reflect on their own understanding of Aboriginal culture, community and people, and how your beliefs might affect the way you engage with Aboriginal children and young people. using the Reflection Tool from page 2 [Understanding-cultural-safety-CSS1-guide.PDF \(ccyp.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.cyp.vic.gov.au/understanding-cultural-safety-css1-guide.pdf)

At Corner Inlet College racism will be identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism within the school environment will be immediately addressed with appropriate consequences. Please refer to the CIC Bullying and Harassment Policy, and Student Behaviour Management Policies for the processes for managing instances of racist behaviour.

Corner Inlet College's Parent, Student and Volunteer Codes of Conduct, Student Behavior Management Policy, and Bullying and Harassment Policy will be used to respond to any incidents of racism. In line with the school's approach to restorative practices, students who engage in racist behaviours will be required to undertake educational activities designed to address and change their behaviours.






Figure 1: Model of social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal people



Figure 1 Reference: Gee G, Dudgeon P, Schultz C, Hart A, Kelley K. (2014). Understanding Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective. Chapter 3 in Dudgeon P, Milroy H, Walker R. (Eds). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice (2nd Edition). Australian Council for Education Research and Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Department of Health and Ageing: Canberra

Figure 2: A brief history of Aboriginal culture and the impact of invasion

				
<p>Aboriginal culture has kept Aboriginal people strong for over 60,000 years. Culture is drawn from the Country, it is shown in language, kinship ties, dance and ceremony.</p>	<p>British Empire invasion interrupts Aboriginal cultural practices through a range of colonising tools, including disease, massacre, removal of people from Country, removal of children and young people from their families, denial of cultural practices, all justified by racist narratives.</p>	<p>Despite this interruption, and attempts at destruction, Aboriginal culture remains intact, although changed. Some knowledge has been lost forever. The protective factors of culture, of Country, have been eroded.</p>	<p>Aboriginal people experience disproportionately negative outcomes in a range of areas because of negative discrimination and a lack of understanding of their culture and history by broader Australian society.</p>	<p>Cultural safety puts respect for Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal cultural practice back into non-Aboriginal spaces, to ensure Aboriginal children and young people are safe. It is about respect, inclusion and understanding that will benefit all children and young people.</p>

### Related Policies

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Parent / Student, and Volunteer Code of Conducts.
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy