The Journey of Success

This artwork represents that the journey of success for a young Aboriginal person is shaped by a solid foundation in learning and development.

Commencing at the bottom left corner, the first meeting place represents the baby being born and the antenatal and early childhood care provided to the mother and family.

The journey then continues along the pathway to the next meeting place which represents preschool entry.

Subsequent meeting places depict learning, meeting teachers and friends along the way, represented by the dots, and reaching a culmination point represented by the next meeting place before continuing on the journey.

The meeting places outside of the pathway represent the families and their support of the learning and development pathway.

The patchwork background represents the many different communities that students come from with the blue representing coastal and the ochre representing inland.

The artwork gradient gradually gets lighter and culminates with the bright yellow star and sun symbol in the top right of the artwork depicting the successful outcome of going to preschool and school.

The original artwork, Journey of Success, was created by Jordan Lovegrove from the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Nation specifically for the Department for Education in South Australia. The artwork symbolises the intent of the Aboriginal Education strategy and reconciliation for the department.
Message from our chief executive

The Department for Education recognises the Aboriginal peoples of South Australia as the first people of our state. We also recognise the diversity of Aboriginal peoples, cultures and histories.

The meaning behind reconciliation is important to all department employees, whether we are Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, leaders, teachers, support staff or corporate staff.

Reconciliation is an act of bringing together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, understanding and respecting each other’s perspectives, recognising the past and building a future together.

Reconciliation can only happen where there is a true commitment to fair treatment and equal opportunities for Aboriginal peoples, and in workplaces that foster inclusion. As such, reconciliation needs to be embedded in our systems, our policies, procedures and the decisions that we make as a department.

As employees of this department, we show our commitment to reconciliation in our individual behaviours and collective organisational culture.

Reconciliation is a challenging journey; one that requires commitment and a willingness to challenge ourselves. This Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is our department’s first Stretch RAP and seeks to do just that. It sets out to stretch and challenge us with identified targets to aim towards and a plan formally committing to what we will do and how we will be accountable for it.

As an agency, our services span the whole of South Australia. We are in a unique position to make a difference, in our classrooms, workplaces and services, to increase equity, develop opportunities and promote relationships built on respect and understanding. Having a RAP demonstrates our commitment – not only to people in wider society but to colleagues and children and young people. It provides a framework, outlines the principles that guide our work and gives us the directions that we need to guide us through this journey.

We all play a part in bringing this plan to life – it belongs to all of us and we are all accountable for it in our many contexts.

It’s important that we all carry a spirit of hope for a better future within us. Reconciliation is a cornerstone to nation building and educating for the future.

Rick Persse
Chief Executive
Our vision for reconciliation

The Department for Education works in partnership with Aboriginal peoples to enable Aboriginal children and young people to achieve their best potential as South Australian citizens.

The department has a strong role and ability to create social change. Our goal is to create better opportunities for all Aboriginal children and young people to develop, achieve and reach their full potential.

Our vision for reconciliation is that our partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal peoples, employees, communities and families, will be built upon respect, trust and equity, and free from racism. Our vision will be fostered through knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages in our workplaces, schools, preschools, children’s centres and communities.

Our diverse workforce will be developed and valued, and our policies, practices, and programs will be culturally inclusive and relevant for Aboriginal peoples. In particular, we will seek out and value Aboriginal voices.

We will take any opportunities to promote equity and fairness, understanding that each individual has a part in bringing about cultural and attitudinal change in our workplaces, services and wider society.

Our business

We are a department working for South Australia’s children and young people, from the time a mother is expecting a child, through the birth process and the early years to starting preschool and school, until a young person leaves their secondary education ready to enter the wider world. We believe that every South Australian child deserves the opportunity to be their best in life.

Our core functions are to:

- oversee early childhood care and development services for South Australian children and families
- provide services that benefit children and families
- lead and manage South Australia’s education system.

The Department for Education comprises more than 30,000 staff working with some 180,000 children and young people (and their families) across all areas of South Australia. This includes over 10,000 Aboriginal children and young people in our schools, preschools and children’s centres. We work closely with these communities to improve outcomes.

We are a department that provides services across the state through 900 public schools, preschools and children’s centres. With the broad reach of our services, each employee is in a unique position to promote cultural change in their workplace, classroom, service and communities.

As at June 2017, 2.5% of our staff identify as Aboriginal. Although this exceeds South Australia’s Strategic Plan target, we are yet to meet the 2% representation in some employment categories.
Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2018 to 2021 links with the department’s strategic plan and our Aboriginal Education strategy.

The department’s strategic plan includes the elements of Great Start and Fairness For All which are especially relevant, in combination with the 10 outcomes for the department:

- Children have a strong start in life
- Students have strong numeracy and literacy skills
- Students overcome the impact of disadvantage on educational achievement
- Students attend school and stay engaged
- Students learn 21st century skills
- Young people are equipped to work in expanding South Australian industries
- Students are equipped to engage globally
- High achievement is supported by quality teaching and leadership
- Young people successfully complete their schooling
- South Australians value and support public education.

The department’s Aboriginal Education strategy signifies our commitment to closing the gap for children and young people. Our RAP is a practical action plan to promote relationships, accountabilities, understandings, and sustainable opportunities. It supports the creation of cultures and environments to deliver upon our strategy.

The RAP was developed by a process of consultation within the department led by a working group comprising representatives from each division, including representation of Aboriginal employees.

The RAP is championed by the executive director, Early Years and Child Development and monitored by the Senior executive group.

Our reconciliation journey

The department’s RAP aims to achieve a positive shift towards seeing reconciliation as a core priority, rather than a symbolic gesture. Our learning is not to simply focus on cultural and community events such as Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks as the basis of a reconciliation agenda, but to also bring in other important elements such as professional development and workplace design, together with the ongoing engagement of Aboriginal peoples through respectful relationships.

One challenge that we identified was to engage divisions which had not led commitments in our previous RAP, as we believe that reconciliation should be the focus of the department as a whole, rather than just a few in order to have meaningful impact across the agency. This RAP was developed in this spirit, through inclusive collaboration.

We encourage schools, preschools and children’s centres to write their own reconciliation action plans to suit their local community context. Reconciliation Australia’s Narragunnawali online platform is free to access and provides practical ways to introduce meaningful reconciliation initiatives. Through the Narragunnawali platform, schools and early learning services can develop a RAP, and teachers and educators can access professional learning and curriculum resources to support the implementation of reconciliation initiatives.
Our achievements

Some of the department’s achievements to date include:

- exceeding South Australia’s Strategic Plan target for Aboriginal employment, although we still have employment categories yet to meet the 2% representation target
- establishing an Aboriginal education directorate with a key role to connect and work collaboratively across the department, government at the state and national levels, with the non-government sector and the Aboriginal community providing a strengthened Aboriginal focus to strategic policy and service delivery
- appointing the director, Aboriginal education to the Senior executive group
- appointing the first female Aboriginal person as a principal of a school in Australia, the late Dr Alice ‘Alitya’ Rigney
- continuing to recruit Aboriginal trainees in various vocations and retaining as many trainees as possible once their traineeship is completed
- offering Aboriginal languages programs for students
- yearly increase in the number of Aboriginal young people achieving their South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) through the South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy (SAASTA)
- holding the Chief Executive’s Reconciliation Awards annually, which are presented to the 2 highest achieving Aboriginal students who have completed their SACE. In addition, the Dame Roma Mitchell Scholarships are presented to students undertaking their SACE, recognised for their commitment to their education, to pursuing their ambitions and to being positive leaders in their communities.

Snapshots of our reconciliation partnerships

South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Council

The department has a longstanding partnership with this council, through supporting its role as a peak body for parent and carer advocacy and voice for Aboriginal children and young people in the education system.

Reconciliation South Australia

A relationship between the department and Reconciliation South Australia has been vital in recent years to develop, through reconciliation education and activities, a greater understanding between Aboriginal peoples and school and preschool communities. Amongst other initiatives, the department partners with Reconciliation South Australia to present an annual schools’ congress called Generation of Change. This day-long program focuses upon the problem of racism in schools, potential solutions, and improving the cultural safety of schools overall.
Our understanding of the key elements

The guiding principles behind our Reconciliation Action Plan 2018 to 2021 are based on the 3 elements developed by Reconciliation Australia: Relationships, Respect and Opportunities.

Reconciliation Australia works to connect and engage people and organisations, build frameworks for action, and promote the many success stories of Australia’s first people.

Relationships

Engaging with and building relationships with our Aboriginal students, their families, employees and the broader Aboriginal community will strengthen our capacity to work collaboratively towards improved outcomes.

Respect

Recognising the histories and cultures of Aboriginal peoples within Australia, especially South Australia, supports nation building. It enables the department to achieve more culturally inclusive outcomes and actively cultivate behaviours that enhance our workplaces and guide the development and delivery of services.

Opportunities

Increasing access and removing barriers to engagement and participation in education creates meaningful prospects for economic participation and social opportunities.

How leaders can play their part

- Develop their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories and cultures
- Promote cultural diversity, respect and inclusiveness and combat all forms of racism
- Promote and support the key elements of relationships, respect and opportunities
- Foster culturally inclusive, accessible and safe workplaces
- Engage in genuine partnership and listen to Aboriginal voices, feedback and views
- Create opportunities for engagement, exchange, discussion and learning.

How educators can play their part

- Enrich the learning of all children and young people about Aboriginal cultures, histories and languages
- Encourage dialogue and create a safe space for cultural exchange and to build relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and young people
- Be accessible and culturally inclusive and responsive in your practice.

How corporate and other professional staff can play their part

- Develop programs that are culturally appropriate and meaningful or specific for Aboriginal peoples
- Foster culturally inclusive, accessible and safe workplaces
- Seek to change thinking, attitudes and behaviours
- Seek and listen to Aboriginal voices, feedback and views.
**Actions and deliverables**

**Relationships**

We will engage with and listen to Aboriginal employees, children, students and families to build strong relationships that strengthen our understanding and capacity to work collaboratively towards better education and development outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people.

**FOCUS AREA:** We each take responsibility for building relationships with Aboriginal peoples in all our contexts

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<th>Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The department’s reconciliation committee actively monitors RAP development and implementation</td>
<td>Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the department’s RAP</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Chair, reconciliation action committee</td>
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<td>Establish a reconciliation committee comprising Aboriginal representatives and divisional representatives from across the department</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
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<td>Meet at least 4 times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation</td>
<td>March; June; September December 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
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<td>Develop and maintain terms of reference for the reconciliation committee</td>
<td>June 2018 and reviewed February 2019; 2020</td>
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<td>Appoint RAP champions from our senior leadership</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector</td>
<td>Develop and implement a communication strategy to promote our RAP and reconciliation to staff and relevant external stakeholders and engage our senior leaders in the delivery of RAP outcomes</td>
<td>June 2018 and reviewed June 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Chair, reconciliation action committee</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish a requirement that all divisions across the department incorporate and report on reconciliation activities in their business plans</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Manager, change management unit</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ensure schools, preschools and children’s centres inform their communities of the department’s plan and affirm their commitment to the 3 elements of Reconciliation, perhaps through Narragunnawali</td>
<td>August 2018</td>
<td>Director, operations</td>
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### Relationships

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<tr>
<td>Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) to strengthen and maintain relationships between Aboriginal staff and non-Aboriginal staff</td>
<td>Organise at least 1 corporate NRW event organised by a different division each year&lt;br&gt;Register NRW events via Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website&lt;br&gt;Encourage staff and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW&lt;br&gt;Ensure our RAP working group participates in 1 external NRW event each year&lt;br&gt;Encourage schools, preschools, children’s centres and partnerships to celebrate NRW and promote Narragunnawali as a key resource</td>
<td>27 May to 3 June 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Chair, reconciliation action committee&lt;br&gt;Director, operations</td>
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### Relationships

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<tr>
<td>Maintain and leverage mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes</td>
<td>Establish a partnership document with the South Australian Aboriginal Education and Training Consultative Committee (SAAETCC) including a statement of intent on how we will work together to support education outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>Director, Aboriginal education</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Partner with SAAETCC in parent engagement forums across school communities to provide advice and community voice to the department on education matters from an Aboriginal community perspective</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
<td>Director, Aboriginal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide project and change management guidelines and templates that include consideration of Aboriginal peoples and culture when planning and implementing projects and programs</td>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>Manager, change management unit</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Support the revival and development of South Australian Aboriginal languages taught in schools through the Aboriginal Community Language and Culture Partnerships project and establishment of partnerships with South Australian Aboriginal language groups</td>
<td>December 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Director, primary learners</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage direct involvement of Aboriginal language specialists in schools to support the learning of South Australian Aboriginal languages through Aboriginal Languages Programs Initiatives</td>
<td>December 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Director, primary learners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal stakeholders</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>Director, Aboriginal education</td>
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## Relationships

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<tr>
<td>Increase Aboriginal involvement and voice across the department</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for Aboriginal children and young people in student learning commissions, Aboriginal Learners in STEM Congress, STEM Ambassadors and the TfEL Compass Ensure Aboriginal peoples are represented on the Learning Improvement Board, Literacy Advisory Group and Numeracy Advisory Group Promote Aboriginal leadership and advice within the department’s governance structures such as Senior Executive Group, local education teams and partnership-based Aboriginal staff network forums Implement One Child One Plan to provide all Aboriginal children and young people with a personalised learning plan, inclusive of child/student and family voice Encourage the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in volunteering in our schools, preschools and children’s centres</td>
<td>December 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Executive director, learning improvement Executive director, learning improvement Director, Aboriginal education Director, disability policy and programs Director, engagement and wellbeing</td>
</tr>
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Respect

We will recognise the contribution of Aboriginal peoples to our local area, our state and our nation. We will strive for more culturally inclusive practices and we will actively cultivate behaviours that enhance our schools, preschools, children’s centres and workplaces, and that guide the development and delivery of services for children, young people and families.

FOCUS AREA: We each take responsibility for recognising Aboriginal cultures and languages, and promoting learning and understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples.

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| Increase staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultures, histories and achievements | Develop a cultural competence learning outcomes framework to support consistent development for all staff. The cultural competence framework is to define the various levels of knowledge and skill development acquired, ranging from cultural awareness to cultural competence. Develop, implement and review a Aboriginal cultural responsiveness training strategy for our staff that defines continuous cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business, and considers various ways learning can be provided. In the first instance:  
  - all Senior Executive Group and Executive Forum members to undertake cultural awareness training  
  - all RAP working group members to undertake cultural awareness training | December 2018 | Director, Aboriginal education  
Executive director, people and culture |
### Respect

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| Increase staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultures, histories and achievements | • 100% of corporate staff undertake online self-directed cultural awareness introductory training (and new corporate staff thereafter)  
• run a pilot cultural awareness program for corporate-based managers and middle level leaders for a minimum of 20 participants during 2018.  
Re-scope the department’s Induction event to include the importance of reconciliation and understanding Aboriginal culture | December 2018  
December 2018  
April 2018 | Executive director  
people and culture |
## Respect

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| Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal peoples and communities by embedding cultural protocols as part of the way our agency functions | Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country inclusive of:  
  • an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of events  
  • inviting a local traditional owner to provide a Welcome to Country at least at 2 significant events each year, including the Education Leaders Conference  
  • an Acknowledgement of Country plaque/poster in all our offices | December 2018 | Director, Aboriginal education |
| Recognise and celebrate local Aboriginal languages, cultures and heritages in our workplaces | Recognise, promote and celebrate local Aboriginal heritage, culture and language in consultation with Aboriginal peoples through the design elements of the refurbished building at 8 Milner Street, Hindmarsh  
  Name each Department for Education occupied level of the Education Centre (31 Flinders Street) after an Aboriginal nation and provide bilingual signage in English and Kaurna in the Education Centre building  
  Encourage communities to recognise, promote and celebrate local Aboriginal heritage, culture and language when planning refurbishments and building new facilities | August 2018  
  June 2019  
  July 2018 | Director, capital programs and asset services |
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<tr>
<td>Celebrate NAIDOC Week and provide opportunities for Aboriginal staff to engage with culture and community during NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>July 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Executive director, people and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal staff to participate in community NAIDOC Week events</td>
<td>July 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Director, Aboriginal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>Support all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events in the local community</td>
<td>July 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>Hold an internal or public NAIDOC Week event in consultation with Aboriginal peoples</td>
<td>July 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</td>
<td>Promote NAIDOC week activities across the department through posters, emails, the intranet and internet</td>
<td>July 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognise excellence in service by Aboriginal peoples</td>
<td>Recognise the cultural and community expertise of Aboriginal peoples working towards better outcomes for children and young people through the Aunty Josie Agius award, a category in the Public Education Awards</td>
<td>October 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Executive director, people and culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more about children and young people’s cultural understanding and capability to inform our approaches</td>
<td>Explore how cultural understanding and capability is measured in public schools and how this evidence is used. Seek views about the timing of these measures and the potential to use evidence across the department in new ways</td>
<td>January 2020</td>
<td>Director, business intelligence</td>
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</table>
Opportunities

We will create opportunities for success for Aboriginal children, students, their families and communities, and Aboriginal employees. We will seek and listen to Aboriginal voice, feedback and ideas. We will strive for better Aboriginal economic participation and equity.

FOCUS AREA: We each take responsibility for creating opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to participate and thrive in our workplaces, schools, preschools and children’s centres.

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<tr>
<td>Improve the educational outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people</td>
<td>Develop an Aboriginal Education strategy to improve the educational outcomes for Aboriginal children and young people</td>
<td>September 2018</td>
<td>Director, Aboriginal education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Aboriginal representation in the workforce</td>
<td>Increase Department for Education Aboriginal workforce participation from the current 2.5% to 4% or better by 2020</td>
<td>December 2020</td>
<td>Senior executive group</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ensure workforce initiatives within the new Aboriginal Education strategy encompass the employee lifecycle (eg attract, recruit, develop, retain, transition) and lead to higher Aboriginal representation within the workforce, particularly in non-traditional roles</td>
<td>Final draft by June 2018</td>
<td>Executive director, people and culture with Aboriginal education to provide strategic advice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Establish an Aboriginal employee consultation group to ensure consideration of Aboriginal voice in the development of policy, services and employment strategies including professional development, that relate to or impact our Aboriginal workforce</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Executive director, people and culture with Aboriginal education to provide strategic advice</td>
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<td>Support our Aboriginal employees to access and engage in targeted</td>
<td>Provide tailored support packages to assist eligible departmental employees who are Aboriginal to combine work and study:</td>
<td>June 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
<td>Executive director, people and culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>workforce programs that support career development</td>
<td>• to complete a teaching qualification and gain employment as a teacher in public education in South Australia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• to complete a social work degree</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Offer traineeships to Aboriginal peoples in a range of areas of the department</td>
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<td>Promote professional development discussions that support non-Aboriginal employees to build their cultural awareness through performance and development tools, resources and training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide opportunities for Aboriginal peoples in teacher roles to access leadership and professional development to ensure Aboriginal teachers pathway into leadership roles within the department through the Dr Alitja Rigney scholarship</td>
<td>May 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
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<td>Increase Aboriginal supplier diversity</td>
<td>Promote Aboriginal procurement opportunities embedded within the department’s procurement governance policy</td>
<td>July 2018</td>
<td>Director, procurement and transport</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Award up to 10 contracts to Aboriginal businesses by end of 2017-2018 under the Aboriginal business procurement policy. In the interim, maintain this target</td>
<td>June 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
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<td>Adopt whole-of-government procurement targets as they are developed</td>
<td>June 2018, 2019, 2020</td>
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Opportunities

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<tr>
<td>Ensure Aboriginal children and young people identified as being at risk through the Child Wellbeing program are supported with practices that are culturally responsive and inclusive of Aboriginal diversity, world views, knowledge and values</td>
<td>Seven of the 60 child wellbeing roles will be classified as the Aboriginal-identified positions of senior Aboriginal family practitioners, with all service delivery across the Child Wellbeing program being delivered via a culturally inclusive practice methodology that actively acknowledges the historical context and specificity for Aboriginal families</td>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Director, student support services</td>
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## Governance, tracking progress and reporting

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| Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the RAP impact measurement report | Complete and submit the RAP impact measurement questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia  
Develop and implement systems to track, measure and report on RAP activities  
Investigate participation in the RAP barometer | 30 September 2018, 2019, 2020  
June 2018  
August 2018, 2020 | Chair, reconciliation action committee |
| Report achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally | Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings  
Communicate quarterly updates on RAP progress to all staff | December 2018, 2019, 2020  
March, June, September, December 2018, 2019, 2020 | Chair, reconciliation action committee |
| Review, refresh and update our RAP                                    | Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements  
Send our draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for feedback  
Submit our draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement | November 2020  
November 2020  
March 2021 | Chair, reconciliation action committee |
Reconciliation Action Plan
2018 to 2021

Contact details:
RAP Contact: Ann-Marie Hayes
Position: Executive Director,
          Early Years and Child Development
Phone: 08 8226 3463
Email: annmarie.hayes2@sa.gov.au