

## Indigenous Advancement Strategy

### Project Outline

Loddon Mallee Preschool Association is embarking on an exciting new project to encourage and support the participation of indigenous families and children in Kindergarten.

We will aim to achieve the project by building strong relationships with local indigenous communities and by continuing to develop informative and interactive educational pathways that embrace indigenous culture, community and understanding.

Through the creation of an environment where indigenous families feel comfortable and welcome we aim to assist all children in gaining a greater understanding of indigenous culture and provide for a smooth transition for indigenous children into primary school and beyond.

### Key Project Objectives:

The key project objectives are;

- To increase the participation rates of young indigenous children in kindergarten
- To improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes for young indigenous children
- Assist in improvement of primary school preparedness for indigenous children
- To increase the indigenous cultural knowledge and community awareness of all children
- Expose all children to learning experiences based on indigenous culture and cultural history
- Wherever possible to introduce children to aboriginal elders and to utilise their knowledge and experience to break down barriers and generate an interest in aboriginal culture
- To help indigenous families feel welcome and a part of the kindergarten community
- Create a sense of positive connection between families of indigenous children and the local preschool community
- Improve the overall knowledge and awareness of educators to support indigenous children and families
- To improve the connectedness of our preschools to the indigenous cooperatives and elders within the municipalities in which we operate



The project will be delivered by enhancing indigenous elements in the kindergarten program, with the educational program at each kindergarten being clearly documented and on display for all families with the indigenous components included as an element.

All of the indigenous cooperatives and community groups will be identified so we can initiate contact where direct contact is not already established. Existing relationships will be strengthened and enhanced through regular meetings and discussions to determine their needs and to address any

issue that may exist or arise. Long-term links and relationships will be developed with existing indigenous cooperatives and elders to generate an environment of trust and openness through taking part in events and face-to-face discussions focusing on needs and expectations. Elders will be encouraged to participate and share on a regular basis their knowledge and experiences with the children and families of the preschools. These relationships will assist to build the confidence and trust of the community. The management of the program will be coordinated through the office of Loddon Mallee Preschool Association to ensure that all of the programs objectives are being met as part of the governance processes.

Engagement and partnerships are key elements of the project and management of these 2 components are the strength behind the project. While we can develop the indigenous exposure through our preschools support from the indigenous community and elders will assist to build the confidence and trust of the community.

Our major relationships are with the indigenous elders, cooperatives, the families and community. To support these relationships we will continue to foster and build on those partnerships we already have with DET, IIR, KPSA's, local Elders & MDAS, BDAC & Njernda. These partnerships will be critical in assisting us to reach more of the indigenous children and families, and will guide us in building stronger bonds with indigenous people.

Key contacts that we know will assist us to establish a strong grounding within the communities is DET workers, KPSA's and Independent Indigenous Representatives (IIR). Our aim for these contacts will be to work closely with our management group to maximise our capacity to reach as many children and families as possible through building relationships with local indigenous members.

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