



Media Release

27 August 2019

Spring Gully Kindergarten acknowledges Bendigo's Aboriginal history by erecting a permanent sculpture of Bunjil the Eagle in honour of the Dja Dja Wurrung clans of Bendigo and surrounding districts.

The sculpture which was commissioned through Dja Dja Wurrung Local Aboriginal Clans Corporation by the Parent Advisory Group at Spring Gully Kindergarten has been a work in progress since 2017. Erected at the kindergarten during NAIDOC week, Bunjil was created by Natasha Carter, a local Jaara woman and artist whose artistic concept was brought to reality by Andre Sardone, who has worked previously with creating sculptures using recycled metal.

Spring Gully Kindergarten staff with the support of their Parent Advisory Group have long had this idea of honouring Bendigo's Aboriginal history and are elated to finally have this idea realised. Melodie Russell, Nominated Supervisor and Educational leader at Spring Gully Kindergarten said "the kindergarten is honoured to have the sculpture within their play space and is thankful to all those involved in its installation, including Shine Bright EYM and the City of Greater Bendigo. We are also grateful to the Parent Advisory Groups of 2017, 2018, 2019 who have supported the project from idea to implementation. Natasha Carter and Andre Sardone worked together to design, create and install this fantastic artwork that fits beautifully within our ethos of creating a culturally safe and environmentally sustainable kindergarten environment."

The timing of the installation of Bunjil at Spring Gully Kindergarten coincided perfectly with the Board of Management at Shine Bright formally adopting their Reconciliation Action Plan. Suzi Sordan, CEO at Shine Bright says "the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) highlights the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in our communities. The Plan is instrumental in developing culturally safe environments that enhance the opportunities for children and families to learn and develop. Embedding cultural perspectives within our organisation's practice is critical to further strengthen inclusion, positive engagement and strengthening of partnerships to achieve the best outcomes for our children, families and staff. The unveiling of the Bunjil sculpture is an example of embedding cultural perspectives and icons within our practices.

A celebration to officially unveil the Bunjil sculpture and to recognise the adoption of Shine Bright's Reconciliation Action Plan will take place at Spring Gully Kindergarten on Thursday 12 September at 1:30 pm and will include a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony from members of the Dja Dja Wurrung community.

Please contact Kate Pentreath at Shine Bright EYM for more information
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Bunjil finds a home amongst the trees at Spring Gully Kindergarten



Bunjil being craned into place



Artists Andre Sardone and Natasha Carter with their creation of Bunjil