

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

April 2024 – April 2026



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority



ACECQA CEO FOREWORD

As an independent national authority, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality (ACECQA) team is located across Australia, and we acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of all the lands across Australia, particularly the Gadigal peoples where our Sydney office is located and pay respects to the past and present Elders of this beautiful land. We recognise the rich and diverse cultures of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the valuable contribution this diversity brings.



I am proud to present our second ACECQA Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which drives and shapes our commitment to the next part of our reconciliation journey from April 2024 to April 2026.

As the national authority responsible for working with governments to administer the National Quality Framework (NQF), ACECQA works in partnership with all governments and the education and care sector to improve quality outcomes for children and their families through the achievement of the objectives of the NQF. We continue to honour our commitments to these objectives and the NQF guiding principles, including that the rights and best interests of children are paramount and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued.

ACECQA embraces unity, equity and equality in an inclusive and diverse workplace that is culturally safe, responsive, rich, and proud. We are committed to furthering our learning about reconciliation, as well as identifying opportunities to meaningfully contribute to Reconciliation across ACECQA and the children's education and care sector and building respectful and collaborative relationships with First Nations' peoples, organisations, and communities.

Fig Tree: Growth and Learning by Natalie Bateman is an artwork that explores the historical and symbolic significance of trees, particularly in relation to children and education.

We continue to promote and embed the NQF guiding principles through our engagement with the children's education and care sector, families, and other key partners, and through our second Innovate RAP, recognising the role we play to drive positive change and shape Australia's future through:

- working in collaboration with the Australian, State and Territory Governments and through partnerships with organisations such as the Narragunnawali Team at Reconciliation Australia and SNAICC, raising awareness about and supporting the sector to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their programs, policies and learning environments.
- overseeing the refresh of the national approved learning frameworks which strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout and expanded the Vision to emphasise all children as successful life-long learners and as active and informed community members with knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.
- acknowledging and supporting the significant work of the sector in embracing reconciliation, noting that almost 50% of all early education services in Australia have commenced, or completed, the Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali RAP development process.
- continuing to strengthen our partnerships through our work with around 150 Community Child Care Fund Restricted Services across the nation, many of which are located in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to support continuous quality improvement, and using learnings from this integral work to support our broader sector work focused on embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

We recognise, respect and value the contributions, histories, cultures, knowledge, and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The next part of our reconciliation journey is supported by our prior RAP commitments, work and achievements which reflect our values and centred on our learning journeys, practices, and relationships. These achievements include our commissioned beautiful artworks on display in our national office and are a key and important focus underpinning this new RAP and our communications to further embed our reconciliation vision.

Thank you to our Reconciliation Advisory Group who worked with our Reconciliation Working Group to develop our second Innovate RAP and to everyone working for ACECQA for their continued commitment delivering on it.

Gabrielle Sinclair
Chief Executive Officer



SECOND INNOVATE RAP

Reconciliation Australia commends the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. ACECQA continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,700 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.



An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that ACECQA will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to ACECQA using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for ACECQA to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, ACECQA will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of ACECQA's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations ACECQA on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

ACECQA'S COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

ACECQA embraces unity, equity and equality in an inclusive and diverse workplace that is culturally responsive, rich, and proud.

Everyone has a role to play in advancing and promoting reconciliation and we recognise, respect and value the contributions, histories, cultures, knowledges, and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to furthering our learning and identifying opportunities to meaningfully contribute to reconciliation across ACECQA and building respectful and collaborative relationships with First Nations' people, organisations, and communities.

Through our engagement with the children's education and care sector, families, and other key partners, we promote and embed the National Quality Framework guiding principles that value Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote equity, inclusion and diversity, and the rights and best interests of children as paramount.

ACECQA's Reconciliation Action Plan further promotes these principles and partnerships, with a focus on recognising the role we play to drive positive change and shape Australia's future.

OUR BUSINESS

ACECQA is an independent national authority that assists governments in implementing the National Quality Framework (NQF) for children's education and care. ACECQA works with the Australian and state and territory governments to:

- implement changes that benefit children birth to 13 years of age and their families
- monitor and promote the consistent application of the Education and Care Services National Law across all states and territories
- support the children's education and care sector to improve quality outcomes for children.

ACECQA is guided by a governing Board whose members are nominated by each state and territory and the Commonwealth. The Board is accountable to the Education Ministers.

OUR VISION is for children to have the best start in life through high quality education and care. This vision is underpinned by our values of commitment, collaboration, integrity and respect.

ACECQA has a staffing headcount of approximately 130 FTE to assist in fulfilling all our functions and projects. ACECQA currently has two Aboriginal staff members and is seeking to increase its headcount of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees through a range of strategies including 'Identified' position advertising. ACECQA aspires to be a workplace that not only encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment but is one that is sought out for employment opportunities. Our organisation has a national geographic reach and is also supporting some other countries by informing their work in the area of quality improvement and the regulation of education and care services.

ACECQA has one office situated on Gadigal Land at 14/1 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010. ACECQA acknowledges and respects the Traditional Custodians of Gadigal Land. As a national organisation, ACECQA works with governments and education and care services across Australia and has staff who are located on other Lands across the country.

OUR RAP

ACECQA is developing a RAP to:

- promote understanding across ACECQA that reconciliation is everyone's business and to build the capacity, clarity and understanding for all ACECQA staff as to the importance of reconciliation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For example, we will do this by encouraging teams to include this as a standing item on team meeting agendas and actively explore ways to promote reconciliation, as individuals and as part of a team.
- embed in ACECQA's organisational culture that reconciliation is a journey that involves ongoing organisational learning, self-reflection and evaluation regarding ACECQA staff attitudes, knowledge of and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their experiences, cultures and languages.
- promote the commitment for our organisation and staff to continuously learn, unlearn and relearn, with the intention of working collaboratively to improve equality and equity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, and children. Staff will have opportunities to participate in cultural responsiveness training and other events and experiences that build their knowledge and understanding of the rich, proud and strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.
- support the authentic and reciprocal connections required to build and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, for the benefit of the work of the organisation and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations ACECQA has relationships with. We will proactively explore and embrace opportunities to build relationships and partner with other organisations such as Reconciliation Australia and SNAICC to action this goal.
- promote ACECQA's development of culturally responsive protocols and processes to increase authentic participation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. Through initiatives such as our cultural responsiveness training and Wellbeing @ ACECQA Framework we proactively promote culturally responsive protocols, processes and authentic engagement and participation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.
- support a strategic approach within ACECQA in building the cultural responsiveness within the organisation and across the children's education and care sector through our communication with the sector and each other.
- acknowledge and promote Australia as a nation of great diversity on ancient lands that have been cared for by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for many tens of thousands of years. We celebrate this diversity in our organisational events and publication of resources and training materials, for example.
- promote and embed in ACECQA's work the National Quality Framework (NQF) guiding principles that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued, and that equity, inclusion and diversity underpin the NQF, and the rights and best interests of children are paramount. We do this by promoting those principles in newsletter articles, social media posts, resources and in our work with other organisations in the sector.

ACECQA has two members of executive who are co-chairs of the Reconciliation Advisory Committee, Rhonda Livingstone, National Education Leader and General Manager, Leadership, Quality and Regulatory Support and Lisa McCoy, General Manager, National Projects. In addition, all members of our Leadership Group have the role of championing the RAP, with Rhonda Livingstone and Lisa McCoy taking the executive leads as RAP Champions.

OUR RECONCILIATION ADVISORY AND WORKING GROUP



Rhonda Livingstone



Lisa McCoy



Carolyn Cousins



Trisha Vollmer



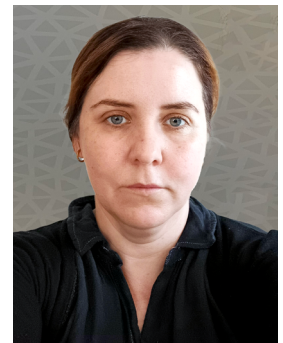
Kate Higginbottom



Laura Cusack



Kerryn Moroney



Lucy Watchirs Smith



Nicole Kilner



Lorraine Madden



Michelle Squire



Jessica Moorcroft

The Leadership Group includes all Executive and Senior Managers of the organisation, including the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer; Senior Manager People and Workplace; Senior Manager Information and Technology; Financial Controller; Senior Manager Business Development and Coordination; General Manager Workforce, Engagement and Research; Senior Manager Workforce and Research; General Manager Leadership, Quality and Regulatory Support; Senior Manager Pathways Program; General Manager Policy and Regulatory Systems; Senior Manager Policy; Senior Manager Regulatory Systems; Board and Company Secretary; General Manager National Projects; Senior Manager Priority Support and Senior Manager National Projects.

Currently, the Reconciliation Advisory Group has internal representation from across the organisation and given we were oversubscribed we created the Reconciliation Working Group to support the Reconciliation Advisory Group's remit. They include Co-Chairs Lisa McCoy and Rhonda Livingstone as well as:

- Senior Manager, Pathways Program, Carolyn Cousins;
- Senior Manager, People and Workplace, Trisha Vollmer;
- Manager Quality Practice and Programs, Kate Higginbottom;
- Senior Project Officer, Qualifications Team, Laura Cusack;
- Community Child Care Fund Restricted (CCCFR) Lead Facilitator, Kerry Moroney;
- Senior Officer Research and Evaluation, Lucy Watchirs Smith;
- Senior Officer Educational Programs and Projects, Nicole Kilner;
- Senior Officer Quality Rating Review, Lorraine Madden;
- Manager Communications and Engagement, Michelle Squire; and
- Support Facilitator, Quality Support Program, Jessica Moorcroft.

There is currently one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person represented on our Reconciliation Advisory Group.

ACECQA would like to seek an external Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander member of the Reconciliation Advisory Group in the future and has explored the value proposition for appropriate external membership, and if this is not possible will focus on increasing our existing networks and relationships to inform implementation.

ACECQA does not have an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group but we have very strong connections and work closely with SNAICC and the Narragunnawali team at Reconciliation Australia and are currently working with around 150 Community Child Care Fund Restricted Services across the nation to support continuous quality improvement, many of which are located in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We also have worked with John Briggs consultancy for a number of years, John has provided advice, training and facilitated an executive workshop to assist in shaping ACECQA's statement of commitment.

We have been working on our RAP for a number of years and proactively embedding strategies to promote reconciliation and build awareness of the rich, strong, proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, contributions and histories. Our Innovate RAP was registered with Reconciliation Australia in 2019. It was a very comprehensive and detailed RAP and significant progress was made on implementing actions, despite the COVID impact which resulted in staff working from home for more than a year. Prior to this we had a Reflect RAP 2016-2017.

A significant achievement was the commissioning of an Aboriginal artist, Chad Briggs to work with ACECQA staff and children from an early childhood education and care service to develop an artwork which adorns the ACECQA Sydney office. With the artist's permission, vectors from this artwork are used in publications and resources. In 2023,

we also commissioned some artwork for our new office depicting the Land our office is situated on. In collaboration with the Aboriginal artist, Natalie Bateman, an Acknowledgement of Country was developed as a key feature in our reception area and with permission from the artist we have elements of her artwork printed onto glazing which are displayed throughout the office.

In addition, we will continue to implement our recruitment and retention plan throughout 2024 to ensure that we continue to provide opportunities and deliver sustainable employment outcomes. This activity will include the development of an internship program. We have also conducted a review of the cultural awareness training that is currently offered and will be further enhanced in 2024.

Our long, collaborative and productive partnership with the Narragunnawali team at Reconciliation Australia has resulted in lunch box sessions delivered by the team, presentations to lead assessors across Australia and regular social media posts to promote the support available from Reconciliation Australia to services in developing their RAP. Our National Education Leader participated in the Reconciliation in Education Forum (as a panel member) and Narragunnawali Awards in November 2023 as well as presenting at the 2023 Narragunnawali curriculum webinars.

By the end of February 2024 (29/02/24), there were approximately 12,272 schools and early learning services registered to develop a RAP on the Narragunnawali platform. Of these, 8,925 (about 72.7%) were early learning services, representing approximately 50% of all approved services in Australia. 1,729 early learning services had a current published RAP as at 29/02/24, with about 1,219 (70.5%) of these having a [published RAP](#) that had been [refreshed](#) at least once.

In addition, ACECQA continues to implement its recruitment and retention plan. We continue to advertise all position vacancies via the *National Indigenous Times* and have gained access to the APSC Affirmative Measure Recruitment Hub. We are now accessing resources on the Affirmative Measure Recruitment Hub to assist with recruitment activities. We continue to explore avenues for attracting more candidates including extended recruitment activities outside of Sydney.

Another significant achievement relates to the provision in our new ACECQA Enterprise Agreement 2022-25, that recognises the cultural sensitivities of observing Australia Day, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and allows substitution of the Australia Day Public Holiday for another day in lieu. Employees had access to this leave option for the first time in January 2023.

Across 2019 – 2022, ACECQA led a major project in collaboration with all governments to update the two nationally approved curriculum documents for early childhood education and care and school age care (known as the national Approved Learning Frameworks). One of the most significant updates to the curriculum documents involved strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout the frameworks including the vision, principles, practices and outcome. In essence, these changes will support, drive and embed profound, long-term positive advancement of reconciliation across Australia.

As well, we have supported other education and care sector stakeholders, for example we have had an executive member participate in the Early Childhood Australia Reconciliation Advisory Group for six years and have provided financial support for travel scholarships to participate in ECA's annual Reconciliation Symposium and consideration will be given about future support.

RELATIONSHIPS



Building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples is very important to our organisation. Through our engagement with the children’s education and care sector, families and other key partners, we are focused on promoting and embedding in ACECQA’s work and that of the children’s education and care sector, the National Quality Framework guiding principles that value Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote equity, inclusion and diversity, and the rights and best interests of children as paramount.

Action		
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.		
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop our reciprocal relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and increase engagement.	October 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations, locally and nationally, for example regular meetings with SNAICC.	December 2024	General Manager, Workforce Engagement and Research
Maintain our relationship with Narragunnawali Team members and schedule regular meetings to share resources and information to promote reconciliation.	February 2025 May 2024, 2025 August 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).		
Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to the sector	May 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May-3 June 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects

Action		
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).		
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May- 3 June, 2024, 2025	ACECQA Life (led by Senior Manager National Projects and Facilities Manager)
Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	May 2024, 2025	General Manager, Workforce Engagement and Research
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.		
Develop and implement an internal communications strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	December 2024	General Manager, Workforce Engagement and Research
Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through quarterly articles which promote and embed the NQF <i>guiding principles that value Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote equity, inclusion and diversity, and the rights and best interests of children as paramount.</i>	January, March, June, September and December 2024, 2025	National Education Leader
Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes through collaborating with Reconciliation Australia and the Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team.	July 2025	National Education Leader
Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations at least 6 times to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation, including the Education Interagency RAP Working Group (AERO, AITSL, ESA, ACARA, ACECQA) to collaborate on shared events and Mighty Networks RAP Network.	November 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Collaborate with sector support groups such as Australian Government funded Inclusion Support Agencies and promote resources and support available from these agencies to support and promote inclusion, positive race relations and an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and ways of knowing and being.	March, June, September, and November 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader

Action		
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.		
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Report on the review of RAP Action content and associated professional learning and curriculum resources.	December 2025	National Education Leader
Develop ACECQA explainers, useful tips and case study resources about what's changed in the approved learning frameworks and how to address these and participate in further Narragunnawali-hosted webinars (similar to those delivered in 2023).	December 2025	National Education Leader
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.		
Report on the provision of further training on ACECQA's anti-discrimination policy.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Conduct reviews of HR policies and procedures to ensure relevancy of anti-discrimination policy including consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	June and December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Continue to educate all staff on the effects of racism through mandatory cultural responsiveness training.	July 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer
5. Collaborate and partner with Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team to promote reconciliation.		
Seek article(s) from the Narragunnawali Team for the ACECQA Newsletter and/or Regulatory Authority (RA) Update	February, April, June, August, October and December 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader
Collaborate with our partners, the Narragunnawali team to promote resources on their website and contribute to Narragunnawali News.	July, December 2024, 2025	National Education Leader
Partner with the Narragunnawali team by sharing data to promote engagement with the RAP platform, template and resources.	March, June, August, October and December 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader

RESPECT



Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, cultures, histories, knowledge and rights are very important to our organisation given our role in promoting and embedding the National Quality Framework guiding principles that value Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and promote equity, inclusion and diversity, and the rights and best interests of children as paramount.

Action		
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.		
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Continue to implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	June 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation through a survey for all staff and an induction survey.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors in the local Councils to inform our cultural learning and understanding and inform our meeting room names.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Better support First Nations representation on the ACECQA convened Ratings Review Panel pool, by highlighting this knowledge and understanding when we next ask for nominations from the states and territories which will support staff’s learning and understanding.	October 2024	General Manager, Policy and Regulatory Systems
Share information regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, significant dates and events, such as Sorry Day, Mabo Day etc. for all ACECQA staff to build understanding and connections to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	February, May, August 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer
Build on our existing calendar of events and creating a resource library on the intranet to develop a tool kit to support staff in their respective roles.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer

Action

6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Promote informal and formal opportunities for all staff to gain knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, histories and cultures, for example use of reflection cards/provocations, yarning mat across the road in the park and for example, AITSL's Intercultural Development Toolkit can be added to our library of resources on the intranet.	June 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning as agreed through performance planning.	February, July 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.		
Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2024	General Manager, Workforce Engagement and Research
Review our cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	December 2024	General Manager, Policy, and Regulatory Systems
Elements from the artwork to be printed onto glazing which will be displayed throughout the office and our main meeting rooms will be represented by Aboriginal and Torres Strait names that are symbolic to our work and environment.	August 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	November 2024, 2025	ACECQA Life (led by Senior Manager National Projects and Facilities Manager)

Action

8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Promote Reconciliation Advisory and Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Continue to support NAIDOC week through an ACECQA event and encourage staff participation.	July 2024, 2025	ACECQA Life (led by Senior Manager National Projects and Facilities Manager)
Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects

OPPORTUNITIES



ACECQA is committed to creating genuine opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all areas of our work as part of our contribution to reconciliation and our commitment to meaningfully partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, services and businesses. This includes investigating opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace as part of ACECQA's overall workforce strategy and increasing our engagement and spend with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers under our procurement strategy.

Action		
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.		
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Update and continue implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	December 2024	Chief Operating Officer
Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer
Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, induction retention and professional development strategy.	June 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer
Report on advertised job vacancies to continually and effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders (for example <i>National Indigenous Times</i> advertisements).	July 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer

Action

10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Conduct a review of all regular purchased items and products with the view to exploring further opportunities to engage Supply Nation Procurement; training with Supply Nation to be held annually.	July 2024, July 2025	Chief Operating Officer
Conduct annual review of Procurement Policy to enable: <ul style="list-style-type: none">» update of policy to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.» communication of our opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	November 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer
Review commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses as part of our project activities e.g. Travel, use of Supply Nation to identify local regional suppliers.	July and December 2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer

GOVERNANCE, TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING



Action

11. Establish and maintain an effective Reconciliation Advisory Group (RAG) to drive governance of the RAP.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAG.	June 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Establish, endorse and confirm commitment to the Terms of Reference for the RAG.	January 2024	CEO
Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, April, June, August and October 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects

12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	June 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments (for example through reporting and discussions at the Leadership Group meetings).	March July, August, November 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November and December 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Re-appoint and maintain two internal RAP Champions from senior management.	January 2024	CEO

Action

13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Share with Executive a bi-monthly report on RAP development and implementation progress.	February, April, May, July, September, November 2024 and 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly through CEO headlines which all staff receive and through the intranet.	April, July and October 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	November 2024, 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP		
Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2025	National Education Leader General Manager National Projects



Contact details

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NATALIE BATEMAN

‘walawaani ngayaga Natalie Bateman Walbanja-Yuin’

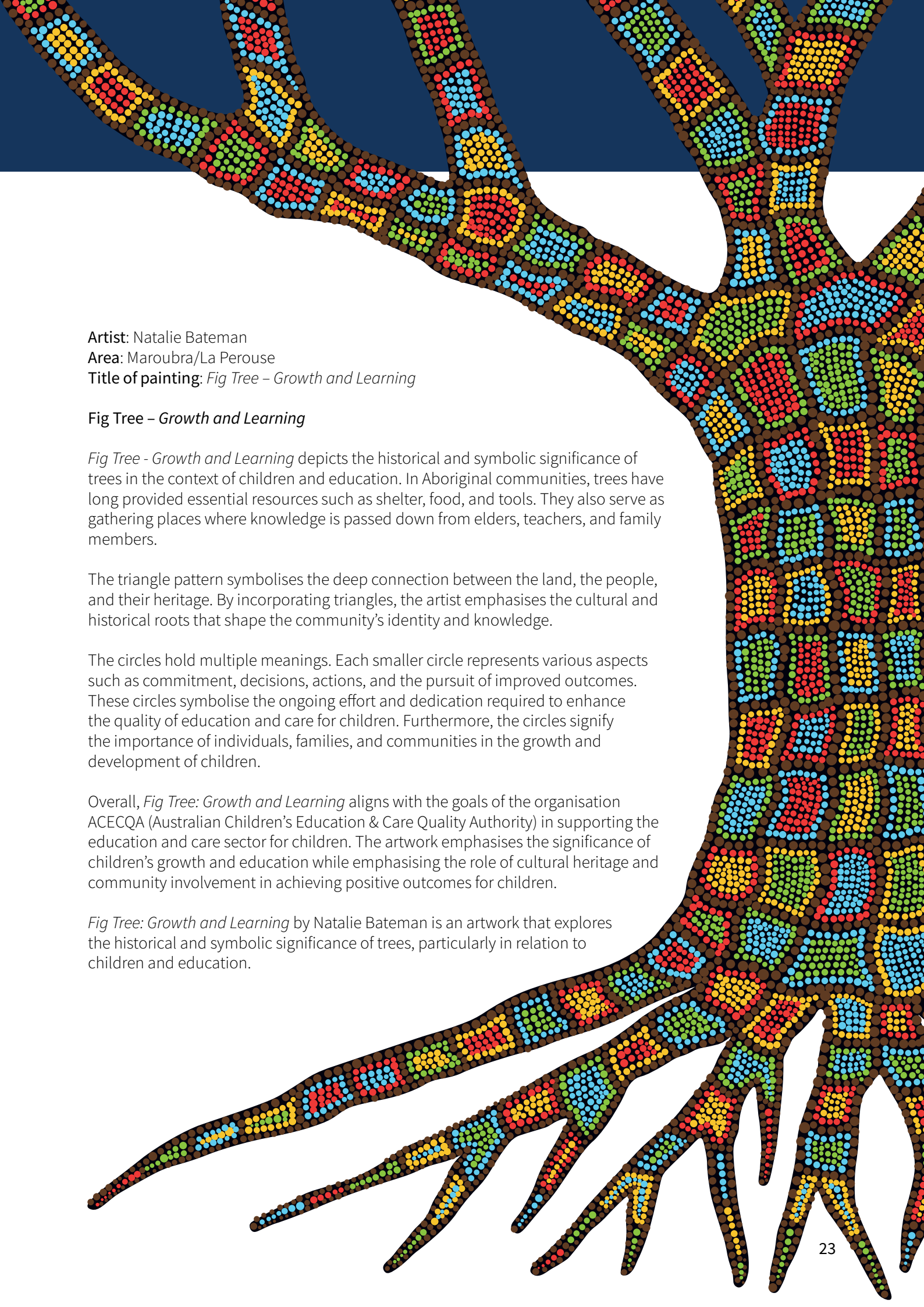
Natalie Bateman, a native of Maroubra and La Perouse, has a rich Aboriginal heritage stemming from her large family, known as the Ella’s, Stewarts, Walkers, Cooley’s, and Browns. Growing up, her family’s activities centred around the ocean, with fishing, diving, and surfing serving as both recreational pastimes and a means of keeping the family united. This upbringing instilled in Natalie a profound connection to the ocean and its inhabitants, which is clearly evident in her artwork.

Natalie’s paintings capture the magnificence of natural environments and reflect her love and admiration for the ocean. Through her art, she seeks to convey the beauty of sea creatures and their habitats. This deep affinity for the marine world stems from her family’s close relationship with the ocean, which played a vital role in their lives.

In addition to her bond with the ocean, Natalie draws inspiration from everyday life and her surroundings. She finds inspiration in the scents, sounds, and stories passed down to her by her elders. The knowledge shared within her family, the respect for cultural traditions, and her active participation in the family kinship system have all contributed to the narrative quality of her paintings.

Currently, Natalie takes pleasure in creating abstract artworks. She revels in the exploration of colours and shapes, using them in a way that uplifts and resonates with those who appreciate her art. Her abstract pieces aim to evoke emotions and establish a profound connection with viewers, reflecting the essence of her family and the cultural heritage she proudly carries within her.

Through her art, Natalie Bateman combines her connection to the ocean, her family’s traditions, and her personal experiences to create visually stunning and emotionally engaging works. Her paintings not only serve as a celebration of her cultural background but also serve as a means to connect with others and foster a deeper appreciation for the natural world.



Artist: Natalie Bateman

Area: Maroubra/La Perouse

Title of painting: *Fig Tree – Growth and Learning*

Fig Tree – Growth and Learning

Fig Tree - Growth and Learning depicts the historical and symbolic significance of trees in the context of children and education. In Aboriginal communities, trees have long provided essential resources such as shelter, food, and tools. They also serve as gathering places where knowledge is passed down from elders, teachers, and family members.

The triangle pattern symbolises the deep connection between the land, the people, and their heritage. By incorporating triangles, the artist emphasises the cultural and historical roots that shape the community’s identity and knowledge.

The circles hold multiple meanings. Each smaller circle represents various aspects such as commitment, decisions, actions, and the pursuit of improved outcomes. These circles symbolise the ongoing effort and dedication required to enhance the quality of education and care for children. Furthermore, the circles signify the importance of individuals, families, and communities in the growth and development of children.

Overall, *Fig Tree: Growth and Learning* aligns with the goals of the organisation ACECQA (Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority) in supporting the education and care sector for children. The artwork emphasises the significance of children’s growth and education while emphasising the role of cultural heritage and community involvement in achieving positive outcomes for children.

Fig Tree: Growth and Learning by Natalie Bateman is an artwork that explores the historical and symbolic significance of trees, particularly in relation to children and education.



*Children have the best start in life
through high quality education and care.*

Artwork: *Figtree – Growth and Learning* by Natalie Bateman

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