PALMY PAGE – CULTURAL SAFETY PRACTICE

Culture, connection and belonging shape how we work together.

OUR BELIEF – THE WHY?

At Palmerston District Primary School, we believe cultural safety is fundamental to how we learn, work and belong together.

Cultural safety has its foundations in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and perspectives. We recognise this origin and the importance of maintaining cultural integrity as we use cultural safety as a whole-school framework, to support all students and families in our diverse school community.

Across our school, cultural safety means creating the conditions where students, families and staff feel safe to be themselves, contribute their perspectives, experience respect and difference, and genuinely belong. Cultural safety strengthens inclusion and wellbeing and influences how we work with people, design our places and enact our processes. **Cultural safety is not an addition to our work — it shapes how we work.**

HOW WE WORK – THE HOW?

We bring this belief to life through five connected ways of working:

PRESENCE & LANGUAGE OF SAFETY

- We create safety through how we show up and listen first
- We use respectful, inclusive language.
- We approach difference with curiosity, care and humility.

CONNECTION & RELATIONSHIPS

- We take time to connect to understand
- We build genuine relationships with students, families, staff and community.
- We listen to and value different voices, perspectives and experiences.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY & GROWTH

- Cultural safety is everyone's responsibility.
- We recognise and challenge racism, bias and practices that privilege one cultural worldview over another.
- We reflect on our impact and learn from feedback and community voice.
- We prioritise adapting and grow our practice.

IDENTITY & BELONGING

- We recognise and value the different identities, cultures, histories and lived experiences people bring.
- We create environments where people can see themselves, openly contribute and belong.
- We recognise identity and culture as strengths.

LEARNING WITH & FROM COUNTRY

- We recognise our relationship and responsibility to Country.
- We create opportunities to learn with and from Country, community and place.
- We value the diverse knowledge, histories, cultures and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

OUR CULTURAL SAFETY FRAMEWORK — OUR KEY PROCESS

1. CULTURE
Agreed Understanding
What do we understand about the situation — what is the agreed culture?

We establish a shared understanding of the culture, expectations, context and ways of working within the situation.

2. CULTURAL AWARENESS
Recognise Differences
What difference perspectives are present?

We seek to understand the perspectives of all people involved recognising different identities, experiences, strengths, expectations and needs. We also examine how our own experiences impact our approaches.

3. CULTURAL SHOCK
Understand Impact
What happens when these differences interact?

We seek to understand the impact that different perspectives, expectations, assumptions and experiences may have on people, participation, connection and belonging.

4. CULTURAL SAFETY
Establish Strategies & Norms
What can we put in place?

We intentionally establish strategies, relationships and shared norms that enable people to safely participate, contribute and belong.

WHERE CULTURAL SAFETY LIVES ACROSS OUR SCHOOL

WITH OUR PEOPLE

We build strong relationships and value voice, communication and connection with **students, families and staff.**

IN OUR PLACES

We create welcoming, inclusive environments that **value identity, connection to Country and a sense of belonging.**

IN OUR PROCESSES

We embed cultural safety into the way we **plan, teach, respond, communicate and make decisions every day.**

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CULTURAL SAFETY IN ACTION

How we implement cultural safety practice across our school.

WITH OUR PEOPLE

1. CULTURE - AGREE UNDERSTANDING
What is the agreed culture?
- Clarify the situation, purpose and shared expectations.
- Understand the people, relationships and context involved.
- Establish what has been agreed about how we work together.

2. CULTURAL AWARENESS - RECOGNISE DIFFERENCES
What perspectives are present?
- Seek to understand the perspectives of all and examine what could be influencing our own perspective.
- Listen/value different voices, experiences, strengths/needs.
- Recognise that people may understand, experience or respond to the same situation differently.

3. CULTURAL SHOCK - UNDERSTAND IMPACT
What happens when these differences interact?
- Notice different perspectives, expectations or experiences.
-Identify tension, misunderstanding, barriers or disconnection.
- Consider who is being affected, how and why.

4. CULTURAL SAFETY - ESTABLISH STRATEGIES & NORMS
What can we put in place?
- Clarify or establish shared expectations.
- Create different ways to participate and contribute.
- Build voice and agency into decisions.
- Adapt communication, support or approach where needed.
- Repair relationships when cultural safety is disrupted.
- Check whether what we put in place is working.

IN OUR PLACES

1. CULTURE - AGREE UNDERSTANDING
What is the agreed culture?
- Understand the purpose of the place and how it is used.
- Consider Country, community and cultural context.
- Clarify what we want people to experience within the space.

2. CULTURAL AWARENESS - RECOGNISE DIFFERENCES
What perspectives are present?
- Consider how different people may experience the same place.
- Notice whose identities, cultures and perspectives are visible.
- Seek different perspectives about what supports connection, participation and belonging.

3. CULTURAL SHOCK - UNDERSTAND IMPACT
What happens when these differences interact?
- Identify where the environment may create barriers, exclusion, discomfort or disconnection.
- Consider who may not see themselves or their culture represented.
- Notice how the space influences participation, connection and belonging.

4. CULTURAL SAFETY - ESTABLISH STRATEGIES & NORMS
What can we put in place?
-Remove or reduce identified barriers.
-Create welcoming, inclusive and culturally responsive environments.
- Make different identities, cultures and perspectives visible.
- Provide spaces for connection, regulation, reflection and dialogue.
- Create opportunities to connect with and learn with/from Country.
- Check how people experience the space and adapt where needed.

IN OUR PROCESSES

1. CULTURE - AGREE UNDERSTANDING
What is the agreed culture?
- Clarify the purpose, expectations and agreed ways of working.
- Understand who is involved and the context.
- Use our agreed practices and Palmy Pages to create shared understanding.

2. CULTURAL AWARENESS - RECOGNISE DIFFERENCES
What perspectives are present?
-Seek student, family, staff and community perspectives.
-Consider different experiences, strengths, needs and expectations.
-Recognise that the same process, decision or communication may be experienced differently.

3. CULTURAL SHOCK - UNDERSTAND IMPACT
What happens when these differences interact?
-Identify where systems, routines, expectations or decisions may create barriers or tension.
-Consider who may be affected and how.
- Reflect on the impact of our practice, not just our intention.

4. CULTURAL SAFETY - ESTABLISH STRATEGIES & NORMS
What can we put in place?
-Clarify expectations and communication.
-Adapt practices or systems where needed.
-Create different ways for people to participate and contribute.
-Respond to feedback and identified impact.
-Reinforce and review our shared Cultural Safety Norms.
-Check whether strategies are working and adapt where needed.

CULTURAL INTEGRITY — A DISTINCT COMMITMENT

Our **Cultural Safety Framework** has its foundations in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, experiences and perspectives.
As we embed cultural safety as a framework for everyone at Palmerston, we also have a responsibility to maintain and strengthen its cultural integrity.
This means ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' diverse perspectives, histories, cultures, identities and connections to Country remain visible, respected and authentically embedded in our school.

OUR CULTURAL INTEGRITY TEAM
Our Cultural Integrity Team leads, guides and supports this work across three interconnected focus areas:

1. STUDENT & FAMILY CONNECTIONS

- Listen first.
- Build respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and communities.
- Strengthen student and family voice.
- Create opportunities for community partnership and participation.
- Authentically celebrate identity, culture, achievement and success.
- Support culturally responsive communication and connection.

Examples: Family yarning circles, student voice, community partnerships, family-led initiatives, visible celebration of culture, cultural events and community connection (i.e. NAIDOC and Reconciliation).

2. TEACHING & LEARNING

- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, histories, cultures and contributions across learning.
- Plan with Country, community and context in mind.
- Build relationships with local Traditional Custodians and follow community protocols when using cultural knowledge, stories and languages.
- Build staff knowledge and capability through professional learning.
- Support culturally responsive pedagogy and assessment.

Examples: Learning on Country, truth telling sessions, local learning walks, co-design with community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander texts and resources, professional learning, local stories and language.

3. WELLBEING & BELONGING

- Strengthen culturally safe environments where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families experience connection and belonging.
- Create culturally responsive approaches to wellbeing and support.
- Recognise identity, culture and connection as strengths.
- Create spaces and experiences that support connection to Country, culture and community.

Examples: Cultural Safety Norms, yarning spaces, restorative conversations, Aboriginal artwork and culturally meaningful visuals, authentic Acknowledgements of Country, recognition of Country and local community, and culturally welcoming spaces.

We continually strive for a culturally safe school.

Cultural integrity ensures we honour the origins of this work and our responsibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families, cultures and communities.

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